# Questioning militarism in Spartan religion analysis of dedications from four Spartan sanctuaries

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# Questioning Militarism in Spartan Religion: Analysis of Dedications from Four Spartan Sanctuaries

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**Abstract**

The view of Spartan society as dominated by militaristic ideology and policies has been challenged strongly in the past 30 years by ancient historians and archaeologists. Leading work done by Stephen Hodkinson and a series of conferences on ancient Sparta have been central in this debate.

Spartan religion has also often been seen as part of the bigger picture of militaristic Sparta. This study looks at archaeological material found at sanctuaries in order to assess how militaristic Spartan religious practices and social concerns were; this material evidence has not been previously examined with that question in mind. Four well-excavated sites have been chosen for detailed analysis: the sanctuaries of Orthia, Helen and Menelaos, Apollo and Athena Chalkioikos. The archaeological evidence for each of these sites is studied in conjunction with literary and epigraphic sources in order to see the full picture of cult practice and to examine whether religious practices attested at these sites support the idea of militaristic nature of Spartan society, or whether instead a more nuanced picture emerges than previously thought. The wide chronological range from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period allows us to examine if there were any peak periods for intensive military concerns in Sparta.

What this study shows is that while military dedications were found at all four sites, they did not dominate the material at any of them. Instead, they are found alongside the material reflecting other concerns of the worshippers that have to do with women, children, and structures of society not related to warfare. This study also shows that focusing mainly on literary descriptions of rituals at the sanctuaries, previous research has found supportive evidence for a militaristic society, however, when these sources are studied together with the archaeological evidence, it becomes clear that military concerns were only part of the picture. The wider image we get from studying all the evidence for these sites is of a society with a rich and varied range of concerns for their inhabitants.

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Firstly, I would like to thank the staff at the Institute of Classical Studies Library in London; it was a stimulating place to work throughout the writing of this dissertation. The library was also a home for the wider postgraduate community, which gave both intellectual and emotional support. I also spent a summer at the British School in Athens, and the staff there deserves my thanks as well. During that summer I was able to look at objects at the Sparta Museum, and I am grateful for all the assistance there. The Finnish Institute of Athens was my third home, and participating in the fieldwork at Arachamites, Kyllene, and Salamis not only gave me a chance to spend time around the areas that originally formed a part of my thesis, but also to meet and have interesting discussion about archaeology with my colleagues.

This dissertation owes much to my supervisors, Dr Irene Polinskaya and Prof. Hugh Bowden, who guided me throughout the journey, and I would not have been able to complete the research without their comments, criticisms, and support along the way. Dr Polinskaya especially supported me in those difficult months that necessarily happen during the writing of a significant piece of work such as this. Without her help and support, I would not have been able to finish this dissertation. I would also like to offer my sincerest thanks to Professor Antony Spawforth for sharing his forthcoming chapter on the rooftiles from the Menelaion.

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## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. The research questions and aims

This dissertation aims to investigate and question the alleged militaristic character of Spartan religion by means of a detailed study of dedications found in four different Spartan sanctuaries (Orthia, Helen and Menelaos, Apollo, and Athena Chalkioikos) in conjunction with the literary sources that describe the rituals taking place at the sanctuaries. The question posed here, whether Spartan religion was militaristic, derives from the wider discussion on the nature of Spartan society, which had in the past been interpreted as militaristic, or, being arranged so that the institutions and customs were designed to further Sparta's military power. This picture of Sparta as obsessed with warfare has been challenged in the past 30 years, but the revision has had a lesser impact on the understanding of Spartan religion.[1] As recently as 2018, Spartan religion was described as militaristic by Michael Flower, who identified various warlike aspects in the festivals, images of the gods, and religious behaviour described in the literary sources.[2] Others have identified military aspects in rituals performed at the four sanctuaries based on limited data, and drawn conclusions that equate the cult as a whole with the information inferred from the literary evidence.[3] Archaeological evidence has not been systematically assessed with the question of militarism in mind, although some researchers like Hodkinson have used limited sets of archaeological data in their studies.[4] Therefore it is time to turn towards the archaeological data and examine whether it supports the interpretation of Spartan religion as predominantly militaristic in nature, or whether it shows that Spartan concerns were very wide-ranging, which is not necessarily reflected in the literary sources we have preserved. Focusing on the archaeological data is not only sensible because it has not yet been done, but also because it offers the possibility of surveying a longer period of time than can be done by analysing the works of ancient authors preserved to us from various points of time. But it would be one-sided to only look at the preserved objects from the sanctuaries; it is extremely important to analyse the literary sources as well as the archaeological, in order to gain as complete a picture of the nature of the cults as it is

[1] I will return to this topic in section 1.3.2; the reassessment of the nature of Spartan society derives from the series of conferences on Sparta and publications of those papers by the Classical Press of Wales.
[2] Flower 2018.
[3] See sections 2.5.; 3.3.; 4.3.; 5.4.
[4] Hodkinson 2000, especially chapter 9 on bronze dedications, although Hodkinson focuses only on the Classical period. His main research question focused on the question of austerity measures, but he also briefly discussed the question of warlike nature of religion.

possible. Not only does this demonstrate the limitations of the literary sources and the reason why scholars have tended to identify various cults as 'warlike', but literary testimonia will also give information about the actions and beliefs that would not have left material traces.[5]

### 1.2. Choice of sanctuaries and limitations of data

Archaeological material is used throughout this dissertation, and I will now discuss the reasons for choosing the sanctuaries of Orthia, Helen and Menelaos (the Menelaion), Apollo at Amyklai (the Amyklaion) and Athena Chalkioikos. The particular concerns involved in the interpretation of the chosen material are discussed towards the end of the introduction (in sections 1.4.2. and 1.4.3), but some general limitations are highlighted here.

The four sanctuaries under study here were chosen in part because they have been relatively well excavated and published and therefore provide a large quantity of archaeological material to analyse. There are some limitations when it comes to the state of publications: all four sanctuaries were originally excavated over a century ago. More recent excavations have taken place at the Menelaion and the Amyklaion, but they have not been fully published yet.[6] In addition, some of the material was not published in detail after the old excavations (such as pottery, or terracotta objects for the sanctuary of Orthia), or the exact quantities for some types of data were not provided in publications (such as the lead figurines in the Orthia sanctuary and the Menelaion).[7] In addition, what is preserved and published is only a fraction of the original material, as organic material does not typically survive the millennia separating the period of use and the excavation. What we have is therefore limited data, but useful conclusions can still be drawn from it when we keep these limitations in mind. Each chapter will address the site-specific limitations.

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[5] This issue of using archaeological material for identifying ritual and its limitations is the subject of a lot of debate. For a recent collection of articles on the topic, see Kyriakidis 2007.

[6] Amykles Research Project responsible for the current excavations at the Amyklaion publishes preliminary reports of each season on the project's website (http://www.amyklaion.gr). The excavations that took place at the Menelaion in the 1970s and 1980s have not yet been published. A draft of Robert Parker's chapter on the cult of Helen and Menelaion has been made available online (https://www.academia.edu/22684765/The_Cult_of_Helen_and_Menelaos_in_the_Spartan_Menelaion). Antony Spawforth was kind enough to show me his draft for the inscriptions found at the sanctuary (Spawforth forthcoming).

[7] Analysing the excavation notebooks and making a database of the data currently being done by Francesca Luongo. Part of her results have been published in an article (Luongo 2015), but the database itself is not yet available.

In addition to the state of excavation and publication, all four sanctuaries are mentioned in the literary sources. This gives us important information about the types of rituals performed in the sanctuaries to complement and contrast with the archaeological evidence. The literary evidence has often been the main source material for those studying Spartan religion, and it has in part influenced the interpretation of these cults and the religion of Sparta in general. The types of rituals performed in the sanctuaries, and the way they have been described by the ancient authors also highlight the central role these four sites played in the religious life in Sparta. The cult of Orthia involved a ritual for young boys that took place at the sanctuary, suggesting it played a central role in maturation rites, and roof tile stamps suggest a further public nature of the cult.[8] At the Amyklaion, the whole population took part in the festival of Hyakinthia, again suggesting the importance of the sanctuary for Sparta.[9] At the sanctuary of Athena, we have literary evidence for sacrifice performed by the ephors (with an armed procession), as well as similar roof tile stamps known from the sanctuary of Orthia, indicating again the public nature of the cult.[10] At the Menelaion the literary evidence is more limited, but roof tile stamps here as well testify to the public nature of the cult.[11] Thus, the sanctuaries were central to cultic life in Sparta and studying the material found in these sanctuaries can be assumed to give a good indication of the nature of Spartan religion.

I have chosen to focus on a time period spanning roughly the Archaic period to the end of the Hellenistic period (ca. 800-31 B.C.). The preservation of archaeological evidence and the use of the cult sites mean that at some sites, during some periods of time, there is less evidence than during others. However, in general all four sanctuaries were in use during this time period, which makes this chronological range a good starting point. Evidence from earlier and later periods will be taken into consideration when it is deemed necessary, e.g. when it highlights changes in practice such as the case of the whipping ritual in the sanctuary of Orthia, where Roman period evidence needs to be included in the discussion. From the Archaic to the Hellenistic period we see the Spartan *polis* rise and expand to control a large part of the Peloponnese, and subsequently, in the fourth century, decline rapidly, with periods of attempted 'restoration' of the old constitution in the third century B.C.[12] This makes this sequence of time periods especially interesting to

[8] See section 2.5.1. and 2.5.3.
[9] See section 4.3.2.
[10] See section 5.3.
[11] See section 3.3.
[12] For the attempted restoration of the Spartan education in particular, see Kennell 1995; Ducat 2006.

examine, because we can also consider if and to what extent the ritual practice related to war changed throughout the centuries. Archaeological evidence is especially important in analysing change through time, as different literary sources rarely describe or comment on similar topics at different periods of time, and, as is the case with Sparta in particular, their views are very much dependent on the particular political contexts in which they were written.[13]

The relatively short distance between the four sanctuaries and the proximity to the central Spartan habitation also gives the benefit of studying the ritual behaviour of a limited group of people, as it is very probable that all four sanctuaries would have been used by the same citizen and resident population. For the festival of Hyakinthia, the description in Athenaios (4.139d-f) lists various groups of people attending the celebration, from citizens to slaves, and that the whole city empties for the festival as they all go to Amyklai.[14] While the Amyklaion was located ca 5 km south of the centre of Sparta, this is not a long distance to travel on foot, and the other three sanctuaries are within a very easy walking distance from one another. Studying the archaeological material found in sanctuaries, consisting mostly of dedicatory material (I will return to this identification later), also gives an insight into the ritual behaviour of women as well as men, giving a more balanced view of the ritual behaviour of the population than we may get from the literary evidence alone. Thus, there is good reason to study these four sanctuaries in order to gain an understanding of the character of Spartan religion. In the future, it would be important to expand the study to all known sanctuaries in Sparta and include rituals that do not take place in these sanctuaries, such as the Karneia and Gymnopaidiai.[15] Especially interesting would be to compare the results from the city of Sparta with those from within the wider territory controlled by Sparta.

Next, it is necessary to discuss the types of material found in the sanctuaries, their limitations, and how that material can be used to discuss the nature of the cults and Spartan religion.

First, archaeological material excavated and published from a site is already the result of choice in the determining the extent of the excavation area, the choice of what to keep and what to publish, and importantly the result of different conditions that led to its preservation. The latter issue means that there is very little organic material preserved, although we know that organic

[13] I will discuss this, the so-called Spartan mirage, in section 1.3.2. below.
[14] This description and festival are discussed in detail in section 4.3.2.
[15] An exhaustive collection of all available evidence for these festivals can be found in Pettersson 1992 (although his methods and interpretation has been criticised by Ducat 2006, 276-277).

materials were frequently used in sanctuaries. For instance, inventory lists from the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron list numerous textile dedications of which none have survived.[16] Textiles, baskets, foodstuffs, etc. have to be presumed among the missing items. In addition, there are particular conditions of preservation at each site that may have an impact on the survival of archaeological material. The sanctuary of Orthia is located on the west bank of the Eurotas river, and we have one clear level dated to around 570/560 B.C. when the river flooded, and the sanctuary was subsequently covered by a layer of sand. This proximity to the river has impacted the preservation of some of the archaeological material above the sand. Droop notes in the site's publication that most of the bronzes were found under this layer of sand, and for those few found above it "the consequent humidity has wrought such havoc with these offerings that only in the most massive is any solid core of metal preserved."[17] This also means that objects made of thin sheets of metal, such as vessels, are unlikely to have survived.[18] Excavators' decisions on what to publish and the details used in the publication are also an important factor: sometimes certain objects are only casually referred to without much detail or even without the statement of exact quantity of the objects. Recording the exact find circumstances was not a practice during the early excavations conducted at Sparta.[19] This has resulted in a set of data, which through different mechanisms has ended up being a limited snapshot of what was originally there. But this is a problem encountered even with the literary sources, which rarely describe what we would like, and leave out important pieces of information. What I will do is to analyse the available archaeological data, and carefully consider what it tells us together with the literary sources. This attempt will undoubtedly leave some questions unanswered and leave room for future study, but we can certainly observe general trends in order to answer the main question of the dissertation, that is, if Spartan religion was predominantly militaristic. I will return to the specific topics of

[16] Linders 1972. More recently, Brøns 2016, who looks at a range of evidence for textile dedications from the whole of Greece.
[17] Droop 1929b, 196.
[18] Hodkinson 2000, 274, who highlights how some bronze vessel handles were more likely to survive than the actual vessel, made of a thin sheet of the metal.
[19] For the sanctuaries excavated by the British School at Athens a century ago, i.e. the sanctuaries of Orthia, Athena Chalkioikos, and the Menelaion, there is often a reference to associated pottery, allowing for some chronological analysis of the finds, which cannot be dated with the help of comparanda. For the sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai, the early excavations were very sparse on contextual information (see individual chapters below). A selection of what to publish is especially evident for the sanctuary of Athena, where finds were published in different volumes of the BSA annual journal, and different authors had different criteria what to describe. See e.g. Lamb 1926/1927, 82 commenting that she is only publishing the "more important" bronzes.

interpretation later on in this introduction and consider what the archaeological evidence can and cannot tell us about the rituals, and how we can interpret iconography. For now, it will suffice to say that the particular objects I consider referring to the military concerns of the cult are arms and armour, miniature versions of the same, as well as figurines and other objects depicting armed anthropomorphic figures. Beyond the dedications related to warfare, I will be discussing a very wide range of different dedications found in the sanctuaries, such as figurines, masks, sculpture, jewellery, and personal items such as pins and fibulae. Some of these objects are ambiguous in meaning, and I will discuss that at the end of this introduction.

I will consider two other types of evidence used throughout this dissertation, the epigraphic and literary. Epigraphic sources are used when they are available from a sanctuary that is studied, and when they can further our understanding of the site. Epigraphic evidence is often crucial for identifying the divinity or divinities worshipped at a sanctuary. Apart from giving the name of the divinity (such as Aphrodite), epigraphic sources can aid us in understanding the emphasis of the cult with the aid of the epithet (such as *hoplismene*, armed). This information is, however, not always straightforward, as the case of the 11 epithets of Artemis at her shrine in Epidauros demonstrates.[20] Clearly, one epithet cannot be seen as an all-embracing summary of the focus of the cult, and often the epithets refer to the location of the sanctuary, giving us no information about the nature of the cult at that location. I will return to this topic later on, as the role the epithets played in Greek cult has been subject to debate. In addition to cult epithets and identities of divinities, epigraphic evidence used here includes dedicatory inscriptions. Epigraphic material can sometimes preserve information about dedications long lost. The inventory lists found in various sanctuaries around the Greek world give interesting insights into choices of dedications by their dedicators (such as the gender divide between dedicating coins and anatomical votives at the Asklepieion in Athens), how the material was treated (such as the increase in melting down of dedications from the Acropolis during the Peloponnesian war), who was in control of the sanctuary, and what kinds of relationships individuals and communities had with each other, with the divine, and how this was presented to the viewer.[21] Thus, inventories

[20] Enodia: *IG* IV2 1.273; 1.274. Ephesia: *IG* IV2 1.501. Hekate: *IG* IV2 1.499. Lysaia: *IG* IV2 1.162; 1.275. Orthia: *IG* IV2 1.495; *IG* IV2 1.502; *IG* IV2 1.381. Pamphilaia: *IG* IV2 1.503. Prothyraia: *IG* IV2 1.276. Saronia: *IG* IV2 1.278; *IG* IV2 1.504. Skopelias: *IG* IV2 1.505. Soteira: *IG* IV2 1.516; *IG* IV2 1.277; *IG* IV2 1.506. Tauropolos: *IG* IV2 1.496.

[21] Gender divide: Scott 2011, 244; Aleshire 1989, 46. Increase in melting down: Scott 2011, 243; *IG* I 3, 316. Power over the sanctuary: Scott 2011, 245. Connections and relationships: Scott 2011, 249.

are increasingly interesting for the study of Greek religion whenever they have survived. No inventory lists have been found in the four Spartan sanctuaries under investigation, but the inventory lists regarding the cults at Brauron and Aegina can be used to shed light on the dedicatory material found in the sanctuary of Orthia and the Menelaion.[22] A third type of epigraphic evidence available for us are stamps on roof tiles found and published from the sanctuaries of Orthia, Athena Chalkioikos, and the Menelaion. These stamps give insight into the name of the divinity, but also who was responsible for the new roof for the buildings they belonged to. For example, roof tile stamps have been used to argue that the cult was a public cult, because of the stamp used on the roof tiles indicating public finances being used for the tiles.[23]

Finally, I will consider the use of literary sources for approaching the question of the nature of Spartan religion. The particular issues with literary sources on Spartan religion and society will be considered in the next section, but here I will highlight some general limitations and possibilities. The use of literary sources for a study on religious behaviour is crucial as it gives insight into the situations, motivations, and contexts of religious rituals and objects. Literary testimonials show that the challenge of understanding past and present religious behaviour is not limited to those trying to study Greek religion today. It was a concern for visitors to the sanctuary, who experienced a large range of dedications present in sanctuaries in antiquity. In Plato's *Phaedrus*, Phaedrus and Socrates arrive at a grove populated by dedications, leading Socrates to note that it must be a shrine of some nymphs and Acheloos (Pl. *Phdr*, 230b-c).[24] Another reaction to dedications, although not as interpretative, is found in Herondas' fourth *Mime*, which describes two women visiting a sanctuary of Asklepios. After making their own dedication, the women admire the quality of the previous dedications placed in the sanctuary (Herondas, *Mime* 4.20-71). Clearly the dedications placed in sanctuaries were an object of the visitor's gaze as well as a subject of discussion or thought related to the nature of the divinity worshipped in the sanctuary.[25] This emphasizes the need to analyse different types of dedications found in the

[22] Especially in the case of the small lead models of textiles, discussed in 2.6.3.
[23] Spawforth forthcoming, section D; Parker forthcoming, 2.
[24] "...And it seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs and of Achelous, judging by the figurines and statues (Νυμφῶν τέ τινων καὶ Ἀχελῴου ἱερὸν ἀπὸ τῶν κορῶν τε καὶ ἀγαλμάτων ἔοικεν εἶναι.)." (Pl. *Phdr*, 230b-c, transl. H. N. Fowler, Loeb edition)
[25] Recently, Kindt has discussed the cognitive aspect of seeing and experiencing cult images in particular (2012, chapter 2, especially p. 42-52). She demonstrates the complexities of interacting with a cult image through a story related in Athenaios (*Deip*. 14.614a-b) about Parmeniscus' visit to the temple of Leto on Delos, where Parmeniscus is cured of his inability to laugh by seeing the statue of Leto inside the temple.

sanctuaries in order to gain an understanding of the cult. Pausanias, being perhaps the most famous of the ancient visitors to sanctuaries, and who incidentally also mentions all four sanctuaries studied here, wrote down (some of) what he saw in sanctuaries, and his testimony is both valuable and problematic. Pausanias is particularly keen on describing statues, and Pritchett counted 694 uses of the word *agalma* (which can be used for any statue, including divine).[26] He also often describes the epithets of deities.[27] But Pausanias is selective in his descriptions: temples are often only mentioned in association with the statues, rather than as objects of descriptions on their own.[28] This leads to an imbalance in the narrative, as we do not always know what has been left out. In his description of the four sanctuaries in Sparta, he places more emphasis on the rituals and cult statues rather than on the buildings, or other objects he would have seen.[29] Therefore, while his testimony is valuable, we should be aware of the things missing from his description. And most importantly, Pausanias writes during the Imperial Roman period, much later than the focus of present work. This is a particularly difficult issue to solve, and I have tried to separate the later literary evidence from the earlier. Sometimes, as in the case with the sanctuary of Orthia, we can see that a ritual already in place during earlier periods is still performed during Pausanias' time, but with some alterations. Placing the literary sources in their proper historical context is crucial.[30]

Choosing to focus on just four sites, rather than mapping out all sanctuaries in Sparta, allows for a detailed study of the different types of evidence for ritual behaviour. Combining the archaeological, epigraphic, and literary sources should give us a variety of different types of evidence for the Spartan religious behaviour, and even keeping in mind the limitations of each category of data, we will see that the data leads to the conclusion that war played only a limited role in Spartan religious life.

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The expectations of seeing and experiencing are at play, and the story ties into human knowledge of the divine.

[26] Pritchett 1998, 61, 65. Pritchett also discusses other words used for statues, both of divine and human subjects (p. 61-63).

[27] 432 in total (Pritchett 1998, 61).

[28] Pritchett 1998, 63.

[29] Pausanias' descriptions are mentioned in each chapter.

[30] A ground-breaking study for Sparta and the historical context of literary sources is Nigel Kennell's book on Spartan education (Kennell 1995).

### 1.3. Previous research

#### 1.3.1. Spartan religion

The choice of words for the title of this section positions my work in a wider debate in the study of Greek religion: was there a single 'Greek religion' or many local Greek religions, such as Spartan, Athenian, or an Epidaurian. There are arguments on both sides of the debate that require some discussion, but the approach in this study is 'local'.

The fact that there was regional variation in the religious beliefs and practices becomes evident as soon as one reads some Pausanias or Herodotus, who are keen to point out various local versions of myths and ritual practices. This has not stopped scholars from considering these variations as demonstrating a range within a whole that is 'Greek religion'. To quote some more recent proponents of this view, Walter Burkert for example acknowledged the differences but emphasized the common Homeric literary culture, common language, panhellenic sanctuaries, and Greek style of visual art, and wrote that "in spite of all emphasis on local or sectarian peculiarities, the Greeks themselves regarded the various manifestations of their religions life as essentially compatible, as a diversity of practice in devotion to the same gods, within the framework of a single world."[31] Similarly, Bremmer saw "sufficient" overlap between the different city-religions to justify the use of the term 'Greek religion'.[32] Vernant wrote "Had it not been for all the works of the epic, lyric, and dramatic poetry, we could speak of Greek cults in the plural instead of a unified Greek religion".[33] There are without doubt many similarities between the cults of different regions, and some panhellenic cults such as that of Apollo at Delphi attracted worshippers from around the Greek world. The oracle at Delphi was consulted on various questions as a type of religious authority, while otherwise there was very little in the way of central authority in Greek religion.[34] The arguments for Greek religion then rely more on the similarities between the different areas in cultic acts, names of divinities, similarities in myths, and so on than on any central authority defining it.

[31] Burkert 1985, 8.
[32] Bremmer 1994, 1. See also discussion of this topic in Polinskaya 2013, 9-15.
[33] Vernant 1993, 100. Otherwise Vernant and Burkert have held quite opposing views, especially on the subject of the nature of Greek gods. For a detailed summary of the views, see Versnel 2011, 31-32.
[34] For a recent discussion on authority in Greek religion, see Parker 2011, especially chapter 2. Parker notes (p. 41) importantly that while the oracle was highly respected and her recommendations obeyed, there was limitations to the authority in that nothing could force the cities to come and consult the oracle.

On the other hand, regional studies have sought to highlight the differences between areas, be it a wider region such as Thessaly or Arcadia, or a *polis*, such as Athens or Sparta.[35] Regional studies attracted attention very early on, such as the surveys of sources for Arcadian or Laconian religion done in the late 18th century.[36] With a resurgence in the 1980s and onwards, regional studies made use of archaeological material not available to earlier scholars, and they placed regional religions in their social and political contexts.[37] Through regional studies scholars have identified beliefs and practices associated with that particular region, such as the *pathemata* (sacralised bodily passions, such as fear, hunger, or laughter) that Richer identified at Sparta, or placed the character of the religion in the political and social contexts, as Flower did when he argued that the military nature of Spartan religion was a way to control the warlike society (I will return to the views of both scholars below).[38] This regional approach has also received some criticism: Mili criticised Fritz Graf's study on north-Ionian cults as being a collection of evidence for gods and epithets, resulting in "a web of individual cults and their Panhellenic connections", but lauded studies such as the one done by Jost for Arcadia for being arranged according to topography, with the cults placed within their respective landscapes.[39] If we do not have this context of the people and the landscape, Mili argues, the study runs the risk of ending up as a collection of evidence, with little reference to something we might call 'religion'.[40] Taking these criticisms onboard, this study will look at both literary and archaeological evidence for cult in four different locations, placing them in the context of the debate on the nature of Spartan society. Rather than surveying all cults in Sparta, the four are chosen partially because they are all mentioned in literary sources several times and based on that evidence, they clearly played a very central role in Spartan society.

Not only have local religions been the topic of scholarly attention, but also the role the deities played in the local pantheon. Versnel described the local pantheon as being "composed in accordance with principles of sacred place and sacred time. Local gods are right *here* in their sacred topography, and they are right *now*, as registered in the familiar chronological order of the local festive calendars. *Their* order is that of a map drawn to delineate a coherent landscape with

[35] Thessaly: Mili 2015; Arcadia: Jost 1985; Sparta: Richer 2012; Athens: Parker 1996.
[36] Immerwahr 1891; Wide 1893.
[37] E.g. Jost 1985 for Arcadia, Fritz Graf 1985 for Ionia, Polinskaya 2013 for Aegina.
[38] Richer 2012, chapter 2.
[39] Mili 2015, 3-4. Her own work focused on Thessalian cults. Graf 1985; Jost 1985.
[40] Mili 2015, 5.

centres of divine power to resort to and divine residents to appeal to, havens to anchor one's identity" (his italics).[41] Polinskaya focused on the local cults on Aegina and demonstrated the complexities of the local pantheon there. She observed that the functions of the divinities (seafaring, warfare, agriculture etc) were distributed among the members of the pantheon, while at the same time there was significant overlapping of functions (Aphrodite, Aphaia, Apollo and possibly Poseidon were associated with seafaring).[42] In addition, she noted the absence of some Olympian/Homeric deities: Hera and Hermes, and possibly Athena.[43] By focusing on just one area, Aegina, Polinskaya was able to observe local interconnections between the deities in the pantheon, and the way the religion was tied to the local social structures. It therefore makes sense to focus on the cults of a particular area, and in detail analyse the different evidence from there in the particular local context.

I now move on to the previous research on Spartan religion as a particular focus of this study. Specific studies of Spartan religion, such as analyses of specific types of finds, or works on earlier periods than the focus of this study is not relevant here, and they will be discussed in the more appropriate places in the following chapters.[44] More broadly, Spartan religion received early attention from Wide, who published his *Lakonische Kulte* in 1893. Since archaeology as a discipline was only taking shape at that time, and excavations around Sparta were only just beginning, his source materials included mostly literary and epigraphical evidence. The catalogue form of the book included very few remarks on Spartan religion in general, apart from a few notes in the end that he was not quite able to differentiate between Doric and pre-Doric cults, belying certain preconceived views of Greek religious history.[45] His analysis of cults based on epithets and literary testimonies with a very large chronological and geographical span leaves the book today only useful as a catalogue of source material. After Wide, early studies on Spartan religion were

[41] Versnel 2011, 116. See also chapter 1, which Versnel dedicates on the complexity of Greek polytheism.
[42] Polinskaya 2013, esp. chapter 8 and p. 359-361.
[43] Polinskaya 2013, 367. This goes against Parker, who argues that all major Olympia/Homeric deities were found in all Greek communities, and that when they are not attested, it is due to questions of preservation of the evidence (Parker 2011, 71). Polinskaya responds that we may never have complete set of data for a location, and the possibility for an absence should be considered when there is no evidence available for their presence.
[44] For earlier periods, especially the recent dissertation of Fragkopoulou (2010) on Spartan sanctuaries and Laconian identity 1200-600 B.C. is relevant, as well as Demakopoulou's (1982) work on the Bronze Age cult at Amyklai. Hero cults in Sparta in the Archaic and Classical periods have recently been discussed in the PhD dissertation of Nicolette Pavlides (2011), and she has also discussed perioikic cults of Apollo (Pavlides 2018).
[45] Wide 1893, 387-388.

dominated by publications of the excavations conducted by the British School in Athens, for which relevant literature will be discussed under each sanctuary.

In the past few decades, Spartan religion has attracted a handful of articles and one recent larger monograph. Robert Parker's two articles on Spartan religion provide broad overviews of the literary evidence on the rituals and festivals at Sparta.[46] Starting with the organization of religious life, Parker notes the important role retained by the kings in religious activities, and how at least some activities were organized by obes, tribes, or phratries.[47] Sacrificed meat was consumed with one's messmates.[48] Apart from the organization of worship, Parker also points out that the Spartan gods tended to be armed. This is based on Plutarch's (*Mor*. 239A; *Mor*. 232D) note that all Spartan gods were armed; Parker takes this view as an exaggeration, but accepts a tendency towards arming the gods.[49] Parker's explanation for this tendency is that it was more likely conservatism than militarism that led to many armed statues, as older statues of gods often bore weapons.[50] This question of armed statues comes up in Flower's argument as well (discussed below), and I will especially address this in the conclusions of this dissertation. Further special Spartan features in Spartan religion were noted: the worship of the Dioscuri and other heroes was extensive, and several festivals involved boys and girls.[51] There was extensive participation in rituals during public festivals, and the festival of Gymnopaidiai was "laconized" into a test of endurance from a ritual involving dancing unclad or unarmed.[52] In addition, the attitude towards death was distinctive, and here Parker draws again from Plutarch (*Lyc*. 27.3), who describes unusual practices such as burying the dead within walls, or allowing inscribed funerary stelae only for men fallen in battle or women who died in childbirth.[53] While Parker does cover different aspects of Spartan religion - from its organization, rituals, and divination to the possible

[46] Parker 1989; Parker 2002. The latter is mostly a republication of the former.
[47] Parker 1989, 143-144.
[48] Plut. *Lyc*. 12.4; Parker 1989, 144.
[49] Parker 1989, 165, n18. The full passages go: Plut. *Mor*. 239A: "They worship Aphrodite in her full armour, and the statues of all the gods, both female and male, they make with spear in hand to indicate that all the gods have the valour which war demands"; Plut. Mor. 232D: "When someone inquired why all the statues of the gods erected among them were equipped with weapons, he said, "So that we may not put upon the gods the reproaches which are spoken against men because of their cowardice, and so that the young men may not pray to the gods unarmed." Both translations F. C. Babbitt, Loeb edition.
[50] Parker 1989, 146.
[51] Parker 1989, 146-149. I will return to the statement of armed Spartan gods later.
[52] Parker 1989, 149-150.
[53] Parker 1989, 150. Dillon has shown recently that the statement that women who died in childbirth were given funerary stelae is based on an emendation of the manuscript, and that it more likely describes special honours to women who held religious office (Dillon 2007).

relationship between the more strict social system and obedience in religious practices – perhaps too little room is left for a discussion of the pantheon and the individual divinities' roles within it. This might be due to the choice of source materials, which give little to discuss. Parker comments that Apollo dominates the festivals, and aspects of other gods relating to youths and male citizens, as well as fertility for women, are brought up especially.[54] Archaeological material is only referred to in the case of the clay masks found in the sanctuary of Orthia, and in the large number of clay tablets connected with hero worship.[55]

A more recent overview of Spartan religion has been written by Flower.[56] He describes his position as more radical and emphasizes the uniqueness of Spartan religion, in opposition to Parker, who saw Spartan religion as being unique on a more superficial level, while retaining similarities with other states on a deeper level.[57] While Flower acknowledges the important issue that Greek religion was not static, and that later sources are problematic for earlier periods, he does use later sources extensively.[58] For Flower, the distinctive themes of Spartan religion were the strong sense of piety even during times of military conflict, when the celebration of festivals was prioritized over taking part in battle;[59] and different "key symbols", i.e. religious personnel, festivals, and armed depictions of gods.[60] For him, Spartan religion was a device for "moderating and controlling the Spartan military ethos", and he identifies many of the cults discussed in the current dissertation as having a military nature.[61] Thus, for Flower Spartan religion was closely tied to the military nature of the society. However, Flower identifies military aspects of a cult based on limited sources. Flower does not take into consideration the wealth of archaeological material found in the sanctuaries discussed in this dissertation, and thus the balance of military vs. other concerns ends up tilted towards the military. I will return to his interpretation of each cult at the beginning of each chapter below.

Hodkinson, who discussed the military nature of Spartan society in an article from 2006 (discussed in the next section below) also briefly looked at religion.[62] He admits that there were

[54] Parker 1989, 148-151.
[55] Parker 1989, 146.
[56] Flower 2009; 2018. The latter is in part repetition of the former, although some parts have been revised.
[57] Flower 2009, 195; Parker 1989, 142.
[58] Flower 2009, 194-195.
[59] Flower 2009, 198-201.
[60] Flower 2009, 205, 206-214.
[61] Flower 2018, 430. I will discuss his views on the nature each cult in the beginning of each of those chapters.
[62] Hodkinson 2006, 141-142.

several military elements: the Promacheia festival (discussed below in section 5.4.1), prominent armed statues (Athena on the acropolis, Apollo at Amyklai, and Aphrodite not far from the acropolis), and festivals such as the Gymnopaidiai. However, Hodkinson points out that armed gods were not a particularly Spartan phenomenon, and that military dedications from the acropolis, the sanctuary of Orthia, and the Menelaion are outnumbered by other types of dedications.[63] Here Hodkinson refers to his work on wealth in Sparta, where he discussed especially the bronze dedications (and others in passing) found in Sparta, from the point of view of using and displaying wealth. He notes a sharp decline in bronze and lead dedications in the fourth century, corresponding to a general decline elsewhere in Greece.[64] However, Hodkinson uses mostly a quantitative method to analyse the finds, and while the conclusions I reach here align with his general comment on the wider range of dedications than just the military, it is necessary to examine all of the different types of dedications in more detail in order to get a fuller picture of the nature of the cults at the four different sanctuaries.

Even more recently, a monograph on Spartan religion by Nicholas Richer (2012) collected various literary sources on Sparta, along with arranging and analysing them thematically.[65] The military aspect of Spartan religion is discussed briefly as a separate section in the beginning, listing different literary sources and divinities, but excluding archaeological material and detailed analysis of the sources.[66] As mentioned already above, Richer argued for the uniqueness of Spartan religion, and especially the sacralization of the *pathemata*.[67] In this way, Richer is close to Flower, who also sees Spartan religion as unique in comparison to other Greek areas. An earlier article by Richer dealt specifically with war and religion in Sparta, but there again he did not consider archaeological sources, leading him to conclude for example that the cult of Apollo at Amyklai did not have a direct military function.[68] However, military dedications found at the sanctuary, the display of a cuirass during a festival, and the armed cult statue, all speak for a military aspect of the god, despite him not being mentioned in the sources for the army on campaign.

[63] Hodkinson 2006, 141.
[64] Hodkinson 2000, 279-280.
[65] Richer 2012.
[66] Richer 2012, 37-43. Later on, references to war come up in the thematical chapters, but not as a separate topic of research.
[67] Richer 2012, chapter 2.
[68] Richer acknowledges that the cult statue was depicted armed, but this did not prove a direct military function (”une fonction militaire directe”) Richer 1999, 137. What a direct military function is, is not explained.

These recent works on Spartan religion have all focused on the literary testimonia for the religious beliefs and practices, and archaeological material is only occasionally brought up, usually to illustrate or support a point made based on literary testimonia. In the present work, I will turn the focus on the archaeological material, and discuss to what extent it supports the view especially promoted by Flower (but also in passing mentioned by others) that Spartan religion was warlike. We will see that by focusing on the literary testimonia, these previous researchers have been led to see military focus in places where it is by no means dominating. By ignoring archaeological material (or using it very sparingly), other concerns of worshippers, such as fertility, upbringing, and women's concerns, have been neglected as they have not been frequently mentioned in the literary sources, which are more concerned with painting a picture of a warlike society. I will now move on to this topic in the following section.

### 1.3.2. Spartan society

Religion does not exist in a vacuum but is intertwined and interconnected with the society around it. At the turn of the millennium, this has been discussed as the 'embeddedness' of religion in the society's structures, and the embeddedness was linked to the concept of *polis* religion. The latter was coined by Christiane Sourvinou-Inwood to describe how the polis as a basic unit of Greek social and political life "anchored, legitimated, and mediated all religious activity".[69] Sourvinou-Inwood saw the religious practices mapped onto *polis* institutions such as demes, phratries and the *gene*, while at the same time similarities between different *poleis* stemmed from the shared pantheon unified and structured by Homer and Hesiod. Shared ideas and values having to do with human and divine, sacred and profane, purity and pollution functioned as a common reference point in the Greek world. On the panhellenic level, the *polis* mediated the participation of its citizens: if a non-Delphian wanted to consult the oracle, Delphian *proxenoi* would offer the preliminary sacrifices before the non-Delphians' consultation.[70] Sourvinou-Inwood identified similar situations at other panhellenic sanctuaries. The model was also related to the idea of the 'embeddedness' of religion, deriving originally from Finley's work on the embeddedness of ancient economy.[71] The embeddedness of religion in the *polis* leads to our inability to conceptualize religion because it is embedded in the society, a society where no religious authority or institution was available to provide an organization in the same way as the Bible, the church, or a specifically trained group of people does for Christianity.[72] Both *polis* religion and the embeddedness of religion have received some criticism, especially for lacking the personal aspect of religious practices and beliefs, and for not explaining the various inconsistencies in Greek religion.[73] But the concept does highlight the relationship between the *polis* and religion, and the need to consider religion in the context of the *polis*' structures and ideologies.

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[69] Sourvinou-Inwood 1990, 297. For a more detailed critical analysis of the concept, and the other proponents of the concept, see recently Kindt 2012, chapter 1.

[70] Sourvinou-Inwood 1990, 297. She adds that "on regular consultation days this sacrifice was offered by the Delphic polis for all the enquirers; on other days it was offered on behalf of the enquirer by the *proxenos* of his city". On the other hand, Kindt (2012, 17-18) highlights the personal nature of some of the consultations (such as if a person was going to have a child) and thus showing the lack of polis involvement in some of the consultations.

[71] Finley 1973.

[72] Kindt 2012, 16.

[73] See wider discussion and critique in Kindt 2012, chapter 1 (19-21 for the personal aspect); for inconsistencies see Versnel 2011.

The aim of this dissertation is to examine to what extent Spartan religion reflected the often-described militaristic nature of Spartan society, and therefore it is necessary to examine how previous research has described ancient Sparta. And I will here especially focus on the arguments for, and more recently against, the militaristic nature of the society. The criticism of the interpretation is directly related to the present work, which aims to contribute to this debate by looking at religious ritual in detail.

Spartan society was of interest to European political debate of the 19th and 20th centuries, and not least in Nazi Germany.[74] After the Second World War, after a short break, new interest in the Spartan society arose especially in Britain, with shorter monographs on ancient Sparta written by Jones (1967) and Forrest (1968). These scholars saw Sparta as what is often called the 'theme park' images of ancient Sparta, with emphasis on discipline, warlike nature, and with comparisons to tribal societies.[75] Against the more static view of Spartan society throughout centuries presented by those scholars came an article by Moses Finley (1971), who argued for a 'sixth century revolution' leading to the institutions known in later literary sources; this revolution was a reaction to an old crisis culminating after the so-called Second Messenian War, and leading to profound political, economic and ideological changes.[76] Finley saw these changes creating a unique way of life in Sparta, the success of which Finley saw in the military success of Sparta until the battle of Leuktra in 371 B.C.[77] Around the same time Geoffrey de Ste Croix discussed Spartan society in a chapter on his book on the Peloponnesian war, focusing mainly on Spartan foreign policy, but challenging the 'theme park' image of earlier scholars.[78] The focus on the politics of previous scholars was abandoned by Cartledge whose work has embraced social topics like literacy and women's role in Sparta, and criticised the view of Spartan society as maintaining primitive structures. Military way of life was central to Cartledge's view of Spartan society, which was a way to maintain their fragile hold over the helot population.[79] Cartledge's views on Spartan society have attracted criticism for maintaining the idea of Spartan exceptionalism. Hodkinson

[74] For the use of Sparta from Early Modern period onwards, see the collection of articles in Hodkinson and Morris (eds.) 2012, as well as Morris 2004 for Sparta in Enlightenment period thought.
[75] Jones 1967, 34; Forrest 1968.
[76] Finley 1971, 161-162.
[77] Finley 1971, 166,
[78] De Ste Croix 1972, chapter 4.
[79] Military way of life: Cartledge 2002, 199. Cartledge's main works on ancient Sparta are the diachronic studies Cartledge 2002 (a second edition of the original 1979 book), and a jointly authored book on Hellenistic and Roman Sparta, Cartledge and Spawforth 2002 (also a second edition).

especially has argued in many ways against the idea that Sparta's political system was unique among the Greek *poleis*: he highlighted the way developments in Sparta mirrored developments elsewhere in Greece, although the Spartans took these developments to a more extreme end of the spectrum.[80] Hodkinson's studies have since continued to examine in details various aspects of Spartan life, accompanied by volumes of papers from a series of conferences on Sparta organised with Anton Powell.

Two recently debated themes especially arise from previous research on Sparta that are relevant to us here. First is the question of the *militaristic* nature of its society, and the second is the *exceptional* nature of Spartan society. Before I move on to address these two topics, a few words should be said about the so-called 'Spartan mirage'. A term coined originally by Ollier in his 1933 book *Le mirage Spartiate*, it describes the way our literary sources on Sparta distort the image of the Spartan society due to the particular historical and political contexts they were written in. This is especially evident in the Athenian sources describing Sparta, and importantly for us here, the portrayal of Sparta as a militaristic society is in part a product of this mirage.

This militaristic image was a particular focus for Hodkinson in his 2006 article.[81] Hodkinson showed that those sources form the Archaic and Classical periods, which describe Spartan society as warlike, can either be interpreted differently, or were influenced by contemporary political and philosophical discussions on the nature of successful/unsuccessful societies. Beginning with Tyrtaios fr 12.1-9, (who lists different types of virtues such as running, good looks, or wealth, for the Spartan man and ends with singling out the warrior's might over the others) Hodkinson cautioned against over-interpretation and argued that the fragment does not dismiss the other virtues over the military, but that the other virtues would not be of value unless the men *also* showed warrior's might. In addition, he places the poem in the context of its performance, which in the literary sources are associated with military campaigns.[82] The reception of the poem in Athenian sources likewise downplays the poem's use as evidence for the supremacy of military values, as they either describe the military values in Tyrtaios as common with the Athenians, or

[80] Hodkinson 1997, especially p. 92-98 where he compares Sparta with other areas of Greece. He also compares the decline in bronze dedications in Spartan sanctuaries (p. 95-96) with the observations made by Snodgrass (Snodgrass 1989-1990, 287-294) about the general decline of the quantity of dedications in the Greek world. Hodkinson discusses this is more detail in Hodkinson 2000 (chapter 9).

[81] Hodkinson (2006, 114) himself avoids using the word 'militaristic' due to its association with early modern societies, but others, e.g. Flower 2009 use it.

[82] Hodkinson 2006, 115-116. He also highlights the archaeological evidence for celebrating athletic success at Sparta, of which the Damonon-stele is one example (see below 5.4.1).

highlight how this contrasts with the laws set by Lykourgos, which reflected a wider range of virtues.[83] Other Classical sources also placed the military values at Sparta alongside others, and it is first seen in Thucydides where the influence of military concerns over Spartan institutions first appears.[84] Thucydides (2.39) describes the Spartan practice of *xenelasia* (expulsion of foreigners) and the nature of public upbringing as aspects of Spartan war preparations, but Hodkinson contextualises Thucydides' testimony, emphasizing the highly politicized context of the first year of war between the two *poleis*, and the oration of Perikles, thus making it more about war propaganda than accurate description of Spartan society.[85] Thucydides (1.84) later describes the Spartans' warlike characteristics jointly with other qualities, such as courage, shame, and self-control, and Hodkinson sees this and other aspects of Thucydides' description of the Spartan society as lacking in emphasis on the military nature.[86] It is in the fourth century when the accounts of Sparta's military character start to appear in the literary sources, caused by the expansion of Spartan power following the Peloponnesian war.[87] Aristotle first (*Pol.* 7.1333b11-22) quotes praise for the Spartan system as having been formed with the aim of conquest and war, and later (2.1271b2-6) criticises this emphasis because it led to decline in the time of peace.[88] Isocrates criticises the emphasis on war and Spartan imperialism in several different passages.[89] These explanations of a military focus leading to society's decline were part of a wider trend in discourse during this period, and it was also applied as an explanation for the decline of Thebes, and in general comment on other *poleis*.[90] Sparta was therefore not singled out as unique. In Plato's *Republic* and *Laws*, Hodkinson equally finds a description of a society that only superficially appears to say Sparta was warlike: "military considerations are presented as a significant influence over particular institutions, although some of these institutions are also argued to inculcate non-

[83] Hodkinson 2006, 116-117.
[84] Hodkinson 2006, 117-118.
[85] Hodkinson 2006, 118-119. For a more detailed study on *xenelasia*, see Figueira 2004.
[86] Hodkinson 2006, 119-120.
[87] Hodkinson 2006, 120.
[88] Aristotle, Politics 1269b25-26 and 1324b7-9 also describe the society built with a view to war. Elsewhere he contradicts this description, and describes a wider range of characteristics of society (Hodkinson 2006, 123).
[89] Isokrates, *Busiris* 17-18; *Panathenaikos* 202, 216-217; *Archidamos* 81.
[90] Thebes: Ephorus FGrH 70 F 119; other *poleis*: Aristotle 7.1334a6-9; Hodkinson 2006, 122.

military values".[91] The last of the ancient authors Hodkinson discusses is Xenophon.[92] Hodkinson shows that Xenophon's *Constitution of the Lacedaemonians* describes a *polis* where the Lykourgan system "produced good internal social order and citizens with the right moral qualities".[93] When Xenophon does discuss military matters in detail, he begins the section (11.1) by stating that the following description of military practices comes *after* the previous chapters on other matters, i.e. placing the military topic in a separate compartment and without suggesting that the (previously discussed) society was military in character.[94] To conclude, Hodkinson's article shows that the idea of a military society in Sparta is not backed by the ancient authors. When their arguments are analysed in their particular contexts, Hodkinson shows that it is either during heavily politicised times (such as the Peloponnesian war) or as a reaction to Spartan imperialism and its decline that the authors suggest Spartan society was built with the aim of war.[95] Hodkinson focused on the social aspect of Spartan society, and there is further need to expand analysis of evidence to other aspects of society, such as religion in this dissertation. But the contextualization of sources, and subsequent conclusion that Sparta was not a military society, forms a good base to start studying if a similar conclusion can be made for Spartan religion.

Beyond the 'militarism' of Spartan society, there has also been discussion on the exceptionalism of the society. This is reflected in Flower's work on Spartan religion, as he makes an argument that Spartan religion was exceptional (and used to control the military character of the society!) compared to other *poleis'* religions (see discussion in the previous section). In the recent book *Sparta: Comparative Approaches,* Hodkinson and Hansen make their arguments for, and against the question of whether Sparta was an exceptional *polis*.[96] The discussion of such a

[91] Hodkinson 2006, 124-126. A reference to Sparta (and Crete) being an "army camp" is found in *Laws* 666e-667a, with a similar description in Plutarch (*Lyk*. 24.1).
[92] Dawson identifies Xenophon as one of the pro-Spartan authors mentioned by Aristotle (*Pol*. 7.1333b), but Hodkinson shows this is over-interpretation of Xenophon's statement in *Lac*. 1.1-2 (Dawson 1996, 103; Hodkinson 2006, 126). Xenophon's 'pro-Spartan' views have received criticism by Proietti 1987; Humble 1997; 1999; 2004; (and earlier Strauss 1939; Higgins 1977).
[93] Hodkinson 2006, 127. Here Hodkinson refers especially to Xen. Lac. 2.2., 2.10, 2.14, 3.4. and 7.12, where Xenophon describes Sparta as different from other poleis with Lycourgos' system guiding the men towards activities that promote freedom for poleis, rather than seeking wealth, and engaging in farming, crafts, and trade. I should be noted here that the authorship of the *Constitution of the Lakedaemonians* has been long debated. See Lipka (2002, 5-8) for a review of the arguments and a bibliography on the matter. The authorship of chapter 14 has been more recently discussed by Humble (2004).
[94] Hodkinson 20016, 127.
[95] Hodkinson 2006, 128.
[96] Hodkinson 2009; Hansen 2009. Following these two articles, they wrote a joint article Hodkinson and Hansen 2009 on the future of the debate.

topic cannot be summarized easily within the space available here, so I will only highlight a few subjects that will be relevant especially to my discussion Flower's view on Spartan religion. Hansen maintains several exceptional features in Spartan society, ranging from the role of the dual kingship, citizen status of the Spartiates and the *perioikoi*, public education and military community, to the status of the city as an unwalled area, specialism of function for the urban and rural population, and economic concerns such as the state control over economic activities.[97] Hodkinson responds by describing the society in less exceptional terms, by finding parallels elsewhere in Greece for the various 'exceptional' features, or by showing that the features themselves were not what they first appear. For example, the argument that the absence of a fortification wall in was exceptional is dismissed by Hodkinson by showing that other *poleis* (and not an insignificant number either) also lacked a wall, and that Sparta's lack of a wall was linked to the fact that the urban centre of Sparta had not been invaded until the third century B.C.[98] Most importantly, Hodkinson does not make a counter-argument to Hansen by stating that Sparta was in any way 'just like' the other poleis in Greece. Instead, he argues that Sparta was a "hyper *polis*", i.e. a *polis* "which developed certain Greek norms to their fullest degree".[99] The peculiar aspects of Spartan society are not dismissed completely, but their exceptional nature is not quite what they seem at a first glance. In his discussion on Spartan religion, Flower encounters the issue of Spartan exceptionality early on: "If the Spartans had their own fundamentally distinct culture, one that was markedly different from that of other Greek *poleis*, and if their religious practices and beliefs were embedded in their culture, then their religion should be distinctive to the same degree that their other cultural practices were."[100] Flower takes a clear stance on this by making an argument for the exceptional nature of Spartan religion.[101] As we saw earlier, he also took part in the discussion on the military nature of Spartan society in the same study on the religion. Here again, he projects the argument for the military nature of Spartan society onto religion and finds evidence to support this. However, as Hodkinson showed above, the idea that Sparta was a military society does not stand up to detailed scrutiny. Therefore, this argument for the military nature of Spartan religion needs to be examined in more detail, and the addition of archaeological material used in this dissertation gives a new set of data to analyse, together with the literary

[97] Hansen 2009.
[98] Hodkinson 2009, 425-427.
[99] Hodkinson 2009, 459.
[100] Flower 2009, 196.
[101] Both in 2009, and in the more recent article from 2018.

sources used by Flower and others. Flower dismisses the types of arguments, where parallels from elsewhere are used to downplay unique features. Instead, he argues that it is the "combination or aggregate of these unique features that sets Sparta apart".[102] It is difficult to disprove this type of statement, as any new set of evidence could potentially be dismissed by emphasizing the combination of unique, military features. However, since Flower uses archaeological material very little in his study, the focus on that material here injects a very large quantity of new data into the analysis. We will see that in that data the military aspect of religion is present, but in no dominating way. Therefore, the evidence against the military nature of Spartan religion increases, and it will be more difficult to support Flower's arguments.

Finally, when it comes to the issue of initiatory rituals taking place at the sanctuaries I will be discussing below, it is worth pointing out one more theme discussed in recent research on Sparta: the idea that Spartan institutions were somehow more static than elsewhere, and that some of the religious practices were remnants of an earlier, tribal society. This was based on an idea that since parallels for different Spartan practices (such as age-groups and initiation ceremonies) could be found in modern, mostly African "warrior tribes", then this meant that the Spartan practices were survivals of an earlier period, and that these parallels supported the idea of a military society.[103] More recent anthropological research has since then shown that the customs of the societies used as parallels were in fact quite recent inventions and reactions to modernization and Western colonialization.[104] This means that we need to be careful with assigning antiquity to rituals taking place in the different sanctuaries, and especially seeing military features where there is no explicit evidence for them.

[102] Flower 2009, 195.
[103] Hodkinson 2009b, xiv-xv, with references to Jones 1968, 34; Forrest 1968, 53; Jeffery 1976, 111, 114; Lazenby 1985, vii. Especially the Zulu and Masai in Africa have been used as parallels, of whom the classic studies referred to by ancient historians are Jeanmaire 1913 and Ferguson 1918. Hodkinson discusses the use of anthropological parallels for the study of Sparta also briefly in Hodkinson 2010, 317.
[104] Hodkinson 2009, xv; Kennell 1995, 143-144.

## 1.4. Data and methods of interpretation: dedications as evidence for religious ideas and practice

### 1.4.1. Dedications as ritual practice

It is now time to move on to the dedications found in Greek sanctuaries and to discuss what dedications were, how they were used, and what they could mean.[105] I will then move on to more specific issues of interpretation in the next section.

The Greeks worshipped their divinities with different acts and practices, of which the main ones were: prayer, sacrifice, and dedication. As Van Straten pointed out in the beginning of his article on votive offerings "whoever decides to study one of them will usually find that he must deal with the other two as well".[106] Votive offerings, or dedications (as I am inclined to call them in order to avoid assigning purpose to the objects themselves), are the more permanent of the three, and the large quantities available allow for studying them from different points of view. Here we are also fortunate to have literary sources describing other rituals taking place in the four sanctuaries to complement the picture.

Many different types of objects could end up as dedications, from purpose-made figurines to everyday objects dedicated after they had been used for other purposes. This means that any object found during an excavation could potentially have been dedicated to the divinity worshipped there. It is the ritual action of dedication that defines this meaning for the object.[107] Because there is such a wide range of dedications, scholars have studied them with different emphasis and aims, dividing them into different categories according to their origin, material, or function. Snodgrass divided them into 'raw' and 'converted', analysing the objects from the point of view of if they were specifically made for the purpose of dedication ('converted', such as a clay figurine), or if they were objects, which prior to dedication served another purpose ('raw', such as a dress pin).[108] Merker, in her analysis of figurines, divided them into "functional (i.e., expressive of a specific ritual act) and symbolic (i.e., expressive of underlying concepts inherent in the

[105] The first, and still only, book to focus solely on these objects is Rouse 1901, which provides a large number of literary references to the rituals and different situations for dedication. However, it is lacking in theory, and little archaeological excavation had taken place during his time. Articles in Linders and Nordquist (eds.) 1987, discussed a wide range of issues with interpreting this set of data, and Van Straten focused on votaries in his 1995 article. Most recently, ThesCRA I has dedicated one section on dedications with more updated reference bibliography.

[106] Van Straten 1981, 65.

[107] For an overview on the formulae used on inscriptions specifying that the object was a dedication, see ThesCRA I, 274-276. For a more detailed study on the dedicatory inscriptions from the Archaic to Classical periods, see Lazzarini 1976.

[108] Snodgrass 1989-1990, 291.

cult)".[109] ThesCRA I, in an overview of dedications (chapter 2), divided the material according to the type, i.e. depictions of gods or worshippers, other statues, and objects (such as clothing, jewellery, arms and so on).[110] The principles for division of the material depends on what we want to do with it. In the chapters that follow this introduction I have chosen to first discuss the literary evidence for the cult, and then to discuss the material evidence in categories of the material used for their production, with a few exceptions. I have done this in part because my study responds to the interpretations that stem from literary sources, so it makes sense to discuss that evidence first; the order of discussion then relates to publications that group the evidence by type. This way it is also easier to arrange the objects chronologically in order to observe any potential changes in dedicatory practice through time. Wider themes arising from these different categories are then discussed at the end of each chapter, in order to place the objects in context of other available literary evidence about the cult. In the context of each category of objects, I will be referring to especially the 'raw' and 'converted' -categories, as well as 'functional' and 'symbolic' dedications – these concepts help us think about the role the dedications played in the cult, and what they can tell us about the nature of the divinities.

I begin by outlining my approach to dedications as a way of communicating with the divine. Then I move on to how we can study the dedications, and what kind of information we can extract from them.

**Communication and the ritual of dedication**

While for the vast majority of dedications we do not know the particular circumstances in which they were dedicated, we are fortunate to have some epigraphic evidence describing the way the worshipper wished to communicate with the recipient. On an inscription found at the Acropolis in Athens, it says:

> "Virgin, Telesinos of Kettos set up (this) agalma on the Akropolis; may you, experiencing pleasure in it, grant (him) to set up another."[111]

Here the inscription refers to the temporal aspect of dedication: Telesinos set up the dedication and hopes to receive future favours from the goddess in return. Some dedications were set up in

[109] Merker 2000, 323.
[110] The chapter on dedications was written by John Boardman, Thomas Mannack, Claudia Wagner, Björn Forsén, Robert Parker, and Evgenia Vikela.
[111] Dated to ca. 500-480 B.C. (*CEG* 227, *IG* I 373); Translation by Day 2010, 232.

remembrance of an act of sacrifice, as in the inscription of the fourth to the third century B.C from Cyrene:

> "Hermesandros, the son of Philon, placed this in remembrance over the spring when he brought 120 oxen as a sacrifice to the goddess Artemis on her feast-day; this stands here as an ornament (*kosmos*), a memento (*mnama*) and an honour (*kleos*) for him."[112]

Through this ritual of dedication, the dedicator could establish a relationship of favours, or reciprocity, with the recipient. Of course, dedication could also be done after a prayer, as in the case described by Xenophon (*Anab*. 3.2.11-12), who writes that before the battle of Marathon, the Athenians vowed to sacrifice a goat for each Persian they might kill. The total number of slain Persians apparently exceeded the number of goats available, and they decided to sacrifice 500 goats per year (Herodotus (6.117) gives the number of Persian casualties as 6400). This practice was still followed during Xenophon's time (*Anab*. 3.2.12; Aelian, *VH* 2.25). This communication through the act of dedication is often described as gift exchange: the dedicator gives a gift and expects the recipient divinity to grant a favour in return.[113] However, the success of a dedication in obtaining favours from a recipient was not thought to be guaranteed and therefore in general dedications should not be seen as means of manipulating the divinity. Herodotus (1.90-91) gives a warning of this in his story of Croesus, where Herodotus has him lament that despite his numerous dedications, he has found himself in ruin. The reply from the oracle explains that the cause of this lies in the previous generations of his family, and the dedications were not going to change his fate. Another story of unsuccessful dedications is given by Pausanias (10.14.5), who has Themistokles trying to dedicate some of the Persian spoils to Apollo after the battle of Plataia. Themistokles asked if he should place them inside the temple, but the Pythia replied: "Do not deposit the very beautiful Persian spoils in my temple. Send them back home as quickly as possible".[114]

[112] Oliverio & Pugliese Carratelli & Morelli 1961-1962, 312-313 nos. 161-162. Transl. Van Straten 1981 69.
[113] Langdon has even argued for the act of dedication in Greek religion originating in gift exchange among the Geometric period aristocracy, later moving to the religious sphere (Langdon 1987, 109).
[114] Translation Mikalson 2003, 102.

**Meanings of dedications**

Dedications thus were a part of communication with the divinity. The wide range of different objects that could be used led some earlier researchers to conclude that the type of object had little or no significance for the nature of cult.[115] A simple response to this would be to refer to the anatomical offerings found in healing sanctuaries, testifying to the meaning assigned for the objects. But we already saw earlier in Plato (*Phaedr*, 230b-c) a situation, where the nature of the dedications led to the identification of a shrine. Clearly, the objects carried meaning to those observing them after dedication, and by extension to those dedicating the objects. How are we to tease out the meanings the worshippers or other visitors to a shrine would have assigned to dedications?

It is important to emphasize that we are discussing several meanings, depending on the particular context of observation. The concept of a 'life history' of an object is useful for thinking with. Kopytoff argued that we should understand objects the same way as people, through their biographies.[116] Just like humans, objects have different phases in their biographies, their meaning constantly or often changing.[117] For a purpose-made dedication these different phases could involve situations such as production, purchase, ritual of dedicating, placement among other dedications, re-use of material to make a new dedication, and deposition into what would later become the archaeological context during an excavation.[118] During the different phases, different people saw and interacted with the object, and the meaning assigned to it could be different from person to person, as they placed it in the context of their own experiences. Merker also highlights the simultaneously public and private aspect of the ritual, as the surrounding cultural formulae or the personal narrative of the dedicator had an impact.[119]

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[115] For example, Rouse 1902, 391-393, whose influence can be seen in the interpretation of e.g. Stillwell 1952, 8.

[116] Kopytoff 1986.

[117] Kopytoff also distinguishes different biographies from another. A person has several biographies: psychological, professional, political, familial, economic and so on. The same applies for things. We can distinguish a cultural biography by looking at the thing as a culturally constructed entity, with culturally specific meanings (Kopytoff 1986, 68).

[118] On a cultural biography of an object excavated in a sanctuary, see Holtorf 2002. A more complex situation would arise when the object is not made specifically for the purpose of dedicating, the 'raw offerings' discussed by Snodgrass (1989-1990, 291). For melting down and remaking objects in sanctuaries: Linders 1989-1990. For preparing objects for discard, with examples of e.g. folding metal objects before deposition: Bocher 2008.

[119] Merker 2000, 323.

I discussed above how I will focus on dedications as communication with the divine. The communication could involve a wide range of topics and reasons, whether a dedicator was asking the recipient for something, thanking them, or honouring, or appeasing the divinity with something thought to please them. He or she in theory could choose from a very large smörgåsbord of different dedications, although in practice the choice was limited by tradition, customary local types, and availability. The underlying assumption I am using here is that the choice of the type of dedication was a conscious one, and that the assigned meaning was related to what the object depicted. A dedicator presumably did have a choice and applied some specific, cultural and personal logic in making it.[120] Literary sources do not often comment on the iconography of dedications and the intentions of a dedicator. One instructive example, however, comes from Plutarch's *Themistocles* (31.1). According to Plutarch, while Themistokles was in Sardis, he visited a sanctuary of Meter and saw a bronze statue of a girl called the watercarrier, which he himself had dedicated when he was water commissioner in Athens. It was paid with the fines of those who had tried to steal from the public water supply. We do not know the recipient of the original dedication, only that it ended up in a sanctuary of Meter. We also do not know what the statue looked like exactly (Plutarch only gives the height, 2 cubits), but the nickname (*hydrophoros*) indicates it was a girl carrying a water jar. Here the connection between the dedicator's status, the origin of the funds that made it, and the iconography of the statue is clear. Similar statues made from fines imposed on cheating athletes were dedicated at Olympia next to the entrance to the Stadium (Paus. 5.21.2), then depicting the god in whose honour the games were held.

In order to analyse the finds here, a wide range of additional evidence is needed: literary descriptions of the cult at the site, literary descriptions of the use of that type of object elsewhere, parallels from other sanctuaries from which we have more information, or when lacking any of the above, by attempting to understand the symbolism of the object in question without additional data. Here Merker's division of figurines into 'functional' and 'symbolic' is useful. She highlights the need to gather information about the symbolic content of the cult, including the ritual space, the speech and actions of the participants, and other dedications. And then the symbols taken

[120] The possibility remains that other types of dedications were given with military-related concerns in mind. This is, however, most often impossible to know unless we are fortunate enough to have an inscription. Therefore, we are left with objects, which share a common iconographical theme of war paraphernalia, the shields, the spears, and the helmets and so on.

together "form a code, which is recognized by the participants and passed on to the young."[121] And as we saw with the 'life history' of objects and potential changes in meaning over time and in different contexts, the code is subject to change over time when new meanings are assigned to the symbols.[122] This poses a challenge of interpretation, which will lead to presenting different types of possible meanings for individual objects. But it is important to present a range of possibilities, and while they may differ, often a general, common theme among the possibilities can be found. As an example, we can take the case of an armed figurine: it is not crucial for the argument here to decide if we want to see it as a representation of the dedicator, or the recipient, as we will not be able to prove either way. But the general 'theme' here would be warfare, and in that way, it will be placed in the category of military dedications. We cannot completely discount some personal reasons leading to a dedicator to dedicate one of these military dedications with non-military things in mind, but this problem would be impossible to solve. And in the context of cultural biographies, the general 'theme' would certainly suggest warfare for the observers after the dedication.

If figurines could represent the dedicator or the recipient, some have also been interpreted as substitutes. This has been brought up especially with the numerous figurines of animals found in various sanctuaries. Pausanias narrates a dedication of an object substituting an action:

> "The men of Orneae in Argolis, when hard pressed in war by the Sicyonians, vowed to Apollo that, if they should drive the host of the Sicyonians out of their native land, they would organize a daily procession in his honour at Delphi, and sacrifice victims of a certain kind and of a certain number. Well, they conquered the Sicyonians in battle. But finding the daily fulfilment of their vow a great expense and a still greater trouble, they devised the trick of dedicating to the god bronze figures representing a sacrifice and a procession." (Paus. 10.18.5, transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb edition)

What Pausanias describes as trickery, is also a perpetuation of the promised act: the god receives the sacrifice and procession in the form of a permanent gift. Obviously, the Orneaeans did consider that the god would be satisfied with the modified votive gift, rather than the original that was promised.[123] However, seeing objects as substitutes of action is a generalisation of a probably

[121] Merker 2000, 323.
[122] Merker 2000, 324.
[123] Substitutions could also take place in the case of sacrificial animals, which Antonaccio erroneously quotes as evidence for seeing (all) animal votive offerings as substitutes of real animals (Antonaccio 2005, 100). Antonaccio is quoting Van Straten (1987, 168, n.33), who mentions the following passages: In

more complex ancient reality. Some animals may have fallen into Merker's 'functional' category, as they may have represented sacrificed animals, as mementos of an action as already mentioned above.[124] In addition, animal figurines may have functioned as symbols of action, referring to a symbolic participation in the sacrifice, rather than sacrificing a real animal.[125] At Isthmia, this is supported by the close proximity of the animal figurines to the place of sacrifice.[126] Others may have particular meaning in the specific cultural context. Horse figurines with riders may have been references to the recipient divinity's association with the animal, while a special sub-group of *female* side-saddle riders have mostly been found in sanctuaries of female divinities suggesting a meaning associated with the female sphere.[127] What we need to be particularly cautious about is the tendency to see the objects, especially made of cheaper materials, as cheap substitutes for more expensive items. We do not know how many objects each worshipper would have dedicated, or if smaller objects were dedicated in connection with larger ones. Some of the cheap items, such as lead figurines discussed later on, show such detail that they are likely to have had important symbolic value beyond their cheaper production cost.[128]

Snodgrass' category of 'raw' offerings is relevant for the arms and armour found in some of the sanctuaries discussed here. Their meaning is subject to change as is the case for other dedications. Thinking about a 'life history' of a shield, we can identify a wide range of different meanings for it before it even ends up in a sanctuary: the shield is given or purchased, it is in use in training and battle, it is possibly displayed at home, before possibly passing it down to the next generation. When it enters a sanctuary as a dedication, it has different meanings to different people interacting with it because of this range of past meanings in its biography. The various situations of dedicating armour could range from retirement, fulfilment of a vow, thanking or asking the divinity for protection, or, if it is taken from the enemy, it becomes a part of the god's share in the spoils as a thank offering for success in battle.[129] Many other situations could be

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Herondas' *Miniambus* 4 the worshipper apologizes that can only afford to sacrifice a cockerel and not an ox or a sow (*Miniamb* 4, 14-18); Plato (*Resp*, 2.378 A) suggests a substitution of a pig by some unspecified larger animal in sacrifice.

[124] Suggested already by Rouse 1902, 295-301.

[125] Chamoux 1991, 24-25.

[126] Morgan 1999, 335.

[127] See discussion in section 2.6.5.

[128] Merker 2000, 322; Hodkinson 2000, 279.

[129] A wide range of literary sources related to dedications of arms and armour are collected in Pritchett 1979, chapter 7; and 1991. A catalogue of all arms and armour in Greek sanctuaries can be found in

enumerated, but for the present work, these objects are often a very direct reference to warfare and they are here seen as representing warfare as the topic of communication between the dedicator and the recipient. There is a possibility, as with other objects found in sanctuaries, that they were not dedications at all: sanctuaries could also function as storage space for wealth and important objects.[130]

A particularly problematic category of dedications are the miniature double axes. These were not part of a soldier's panoply in the period and areas discussed in this dissertation,[131] and scholars have rather seen them as amulets or small dedications, some with small holes for suspension. Dugas suggested that the double axes from Tegea were either worn in everyday life as prophylactic objects or manufactured especially for dedication and suspension in a sanctuary setting.[132] While this gives a suggestion for the use of these miniatures, it does not consider them as sign of a sign, nor the connotative meaning of their full-size counterparts.[133] On the other hand, axes are mentioned in the *Iliad* (13.612; 15.711) and are sometimes found in graves dated to the Dark Ages, and so Snodgrass considers the possibility that they were used in battles.[134] Thus, in this case as well, the meaning is ambiguous. We do not have sources describing the use of axes in battles in later periods, which are the focus here, so the question is whether a Greek would have associated axes with mythical warfare after hearing these two mentions in the *Iliad*. This is a question for which we do not have an answer, and thus the meaning of miniature double axes as referring to war is uncertain. In the present work the possibility is maintained, but I follow the principle that the ascription of warfare as an aspect of cult cannot be based on this type of material alone, but must be accompanied by other, less ambiguous dedications.

While dedications can provide us with an interesting view on religious ideas and on motivations of worshippers, they do have their limitations. First of all, as mentioned above, the act

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Gabaldón Martínez 2005. A recent and analytical study on the use of arms and armour as battlefield trophies, a subject not discussed here, can be found in Baitinger 2011.

[130] Xenophon leaves behind his share of the booty from his military campaign in the sanctuary of Artemis at Ephesos, for safekeeping (*Anab*. 5.3.6). For storage of arms and armour on the Athenian Acropolis, see La Follette 1986, 79.

[131] Schwartz 2009, 94.

[132] Dugas 1921, 390.

[133] For discussion on the meaning of miniatures, see Pilz 2011, esp. p 20. Pilz dismisses previous scholarship's tendency to distinguish between full-sized, 'practical' objects, and their miniature counterparts, as dedicating an object was making a practical use of the object. He sees miniatures as a sign of a sign, i.e. the full-size counterpart.

[134] Snodgrass 1999, 40.

of dedication was only one of many activities taking place in these locations, and therefore it cannot give an accurate overview of other rituals, in which material objects were not used, or where the objects used were perishable.[135] However, a wide range of different types that we can see represented among the material remains indicates that they do represent some of the ideas the worshippers had about the recipients. This limitation would be more severe, if the dedications were a homogenous group continuing unchanged during longer periods of time. But since this is not the case with the sanctuaries studied here, this limitation should only prevent us from making strong generalizations based on this group of evidence exclusively.

Second, archaeological remains cannot answer certain questions relating to the temporal aspect of worship. We do not know if dedications from one archaeological context were dedicated during a specific festival or during a longer period of worship, such as one year for example, from one annual festival to the next.[136] In the case of very large amounts of lead figurine dedications found at the sanctuary of Orthia, we simply cannot tell if they were dedicated during the course of a special festival with large masses of people participating, or if the sanctuary attracted a steady flow of worshippers throughout the year (with perhaps some more intense periods of activity during various celebrations).[137]

Third, it was not unusual for more than one divinity to be worshipped in a single precinct.[138] This makes it problematic to study the worship of one divinity. Either one has to exclude sanctuaries where we know two divinities received worship, which would be impossible to do for the four sanctuaries chosen here, or trust that the main deity received most of the dedications (both stylistically and in quantities). The latter is the choice in a recent study on the worship of Hera. Baumbach does not consider the issue of who was the recipient's identity to be of great relevance. He writes:

> "This is partly due to the observation that, since Hera was the main deity at these sanctuaries, she is likely to have received most dedications so that the ones that were not addressed to her would hardly change the picture that derives from the

[135] Merker 2000, 327.
[136] Foxhall 2000. The problem of distinguishing several rituals: Kyriakidis 2007.
[137] Hodkinson (2000, 278, table 7) arranged the total quantities of the lead dedications per annum, but it is less clear what 860 lead dedications per year would mean in terms of the worship at the sanctuary per year. We do not know if this meant more visits, more dedications per visit, more worshippers and so on.
[138] Quite an exceptional case of this is Olympia, where Pausanias' description (5.14.4-5.15.12) gives a large number of different altars and sacrifices performed on them, in honour of a variety of deities.

> analysis of the votive evidence. Furthermore, as far as the Heraia in question are concerned, the cults of subsidiary deities, which can be traced in them, all relate to the main cult so that even the votive offerings that were not dedicated to Hera can provide further information about the characteristics of her cult".[139]

The danger of this approach is that any specific role assigned to the "secondary" deity would be impossible to determine, since all types are assigned to the main deity. In the case of some publications where exact find circumstances are not recorded, this problem cannot be easily solved. The only way would be to look at the sacred precinct as a whole, and study which aspects of divine power the worshippers could invoke when visiting the area. In the four sanctuaries discussed here, I have included the evidence for other cults within the precincts and consider that some of the dedications may have been intended for those divinities.

[139] Baumbach 2004, 7. Later on, Baumbach cannot decide who the crouching boys found at the sanctuary of Poseidon at Isthmia were given to and decides to leave the question open (Baumbach 2004, 184-185).

### 1.4.2. Nature of gods and their functions

After a short overview of the role of dedications in Greek religion in general, and how the act of dedication could be seen as communication between the worshipper and the recipient of the dedication, it is time to move on to how gods have been seen in previous research, and how their functions could be teased out.

The name of a god has been central in attempts to understand the nature of Greek religion, and it is directly relevant to the present inquiry. To what extent we can make inferences about the character of a cult based on the name of the divinity worshipped in the sanctuary and what are the limitations of such inferences? These questions are related to a much wider debate on the nature of Greek gods, and especially the, quite opposing, arguments made by Vernant and Burkert, who see Greek gods as forces or persons respectively. I will discuss the main points they make about the nature of Greek gods, and then discuss how they impact the inquiry on the nature of Spartan religion.

On the one hand, for a structuralist argument promoted by Vernant and others of the so-called 'Paris school', divine names are stable and reliable indicators of divine nature, because Vernant sees Greek gods as forces, with their own modes of action, spheres and limitations.[140] For Vernant, the gods existed by virtue of the network of relationships that made them a part of the divine system. The gods might have been referred to by one name, or the name in plural (as Charis and Charites), but this did not make them 'persons'. According to Vernant, the multiple different epithets of Zeus all meant the same force, while simultaneously varying in religious significance. A god expressed the different aspects and modes of action typical of a power.[141] On the other hand, Vernant considered heroes as exceptional humans, defined by their exemplary actions, but still being mortal. A hero is promoted to a "quasi-divine status" after his death, but in cult may be referred without a name, or by a name connected to the location, not the hero himself.[142]

For Walter Burkert the fact that gods had names not necessarily referring to their function testifies to the emphasis on gods as persons rather than abstractions, ideas, or concepts. He also

[140] An analytical overview of the significance of the 'Paris school' in the study of Greek religion can be found in Versnel 2011 (p. 26-29), who also addresses elsewhere in the same book many of the issues and inconsistencies in Greek religion that have not been addressed yet in scholarship.
[141] Vernant, 1985, 362-364.
[142] Vernant 1985, 365-366. Marathon is an example of a hero named after the location given by Vernant (Vernant 1985, 366).

argued that since the Greeks would say that "Zeus thunders" rather than that the storm is Zeus, then the Greeks must have considered their gods as persons, almost as humans.

These ideas about the gods, and their names, invoking either a force, or a sphere of action, can be seen in the war god Ares/Enyalios.[143] He is in poetry and drama shown as the force of war, or a causal force in the battle between men.[144] Millington has argued that it is his randomness and unreliability as a helper in battle that has led to a low-key cult in Greece, with celebratory festivals lacking due to the war's blind destructiveness and attitudes towards war.[145] Even the name Ares would invoke a series of associations in different media, art, poetry, drama, and so on.[146] At Sparta, the god is perhaps initially surprisingly absent, as all evidence for him come from a late source, Pausanias. He describes a sacrifice to Enyalios (3.14.9-10) associated with the mock-fight at Platanistas by young Spartiates, a statue (3.15.7) standing in the district of Pitane, and a temple of Ares Theritas (3.19.6-7) on the east bank of Eurotas on the way to Therapne (the location of the Menelaion). He is in Sparta also present as an epithet of Aphrodite, Aphrodite Areia, who was according to Pausanias (3.17.5) worshipped on the Spartan acropolis. This epithet of Ares has been used to interpret the cult of Aphrodite Areia as warlike (I will come back to this in section 5.3. below). I will return to cult epithets shortly.

In light of the consideration I have voiced earlier about the interpretive act a worshipper often had to perform when engaging in the setting up of a dedication, we should discuss the evidence that suggests that the Greeks sometimes refrained from attempting to identify a specific deity behind their success or failure. While we may identify various divinities through textual sources, or dedicatory inscriptions, there were also numerous cases where the divinities were not addressed by a specific name. In a description of victory celebrations Xenophon describes how the warriors were urged to wear garlands in honour of the god (στεφανοῦσθαι πάντας τῷ θεῷ) (Xen. *Hell*. 4.3.21). No particular god is described. Similarly, when Pausanias visits Pallantion and describes a sanctuary on the hill, he writes that the divinities had the epiklesis Katharoi, but the locals either do not know the names of the gods, or do not tell him (ὀνόματα μὲν τῶν θεῶν οὐκ

[143] Ares and Enyalios are sometimes described interchangeably in the literary sources, but have separate cultic identities (Millington 2013, 121, n. 634; 192-193).
[144] Millington 2013, chapters 2, 3, and 5 especially discuss the literary context of Ares.
[145] Millington 2013, 263. Gonzales 2004 gives a catalogue of the cults of Ares around the Greek world. Laconia is discussed 99-114.
[146] Millington 2013, 11, quoting West 1997, 54.

ἴσασιν ἢ καὶ εἰδότες οὐ θέλουσιν ἐξαγορεύειν) (Paus. 8.44.6).[147] The former case could be plainly that a specific god was meant, but that Xenophon for one reason or another did not specify who it was.[148] In the latter case, it is possible that Pausanias' suggestion that the locals did not know the names themselves is correct. This is what Bowden suggests for many cults in the Greek world (although he does not specifically discuss the Katharoi at Pallantion), where the name of the divinity was not specified - the rituals were performed, but the exact identity of the divinity was not necessarily known.[149] If the sanctuary has been excavated, as is the case with the one in Pallantion, the dedications can shed a light on the nature, if not the names of divinities worshipped there. In light of all these considerations, it seems that dedications are often better understood as expressive of worshippers' concerns rather than of the deity's precise identity or social role.

What we can observe with the discussion of the nature of the gods is that on the one hand the name is thought to invoke a force, which is similar around Greece, while on the other hand, the name identifies a more personal character, where local differences become more important. While we can map out these different occurrences for the cult of a deity such as Ares and expect these occurrences to influence the ideas people had of the gods, the name is not always useful as evidence for the nature of the cult at a specific location. For the four sanctuaries studied here the name of the divinity is simply not enough to describe the wide range of concerns the worshippers had when they came to visit the sanctuary.

It is also important to remember that geography played a great role in perceptions of the nature of divinities. Local pantheons varied between cities, and while there might have been some panhellenic traits shared by all Heras for example, there was variation in emphasis depending on the local context.[150] Baumbach studied the dedications from six different sanctuaries of Hera, and he found that while there were similarities, the sanctuaries had a local character in the particular emphases of the goddess' aspects.[151] Each sanctuary served the needs of the population around it. This is related to the argument of Davies, who saw a Greek god as constructed from available

[147] See section 3.5. for the sanctuary.
[148] In the Loeb translation Brownson suggests that this referred to "the Dorian Apollo", but there are no sources that indicate that Apollo was a recipient for Spartan victory celebrations and sacrifices in the battlefield.
[149] Bowden 2015.
[150] See for example Mikalson 2010 and Versnel 2011, especially chapter 1.
[151] Baumbach 2004.

powers (or portfolios of powers) on a particular occasion.[152] He argued that we should look past the name of a god, and instead look for the portfolio and the worshippers for whom that portfolio had a meaning, in order to understand how a particular god changed during the course of generations.[153]

**Epithets**

One issue not yet discussed is the role of epithets in understanding divine power. These additional names we find in various sanctuaries seem to say something about the nature of the divinity's power. There may have been a distinction already in antiquity between cult epithets and poetic epithets. Pausanias (7.21.7.) mentions this for the case of Poseidon, dividing his epithets into those made up by poets to adorn their verses, the local names given by the communities, and epithets, which are in general use. To what degree this was true in Pausanias' time, or before him, is difficult to say, and the same goes for Plutarch, who even sees the lack of use of epithet by the Epicureans as a hindrance to communicating with the divinities (Plut. *Adv. Col*. 22, 1119d). Parker acknowledges the difference between the two types of epithets but points out that it is difficult to define the concept of cult epithet on the one hand, and the poetic epithet as something different from it, on the other. The latter served two functions, to adorn the verses, as Pausanias wrote, but also the divinity, since some of the hymns were composed for cultic performance.[154] Parker also argues that the epithet of Athena Hippia (of horses) was used to focus on one aspect of a god in particular, and not meant as a different conception of a deity.[155] Deities with different name+epithet combinations received worship on their own right, and several sanctuaries of one god with different epithets could exist in a single city.[156]

Parker identified three different combinations of name+epithet. The first was a compound of two divine names, where the first one is used as a noun and the other as an adjective; Athena Areia, Zeus Aphrodisios, Athena Hephaistia and so on.[157] The second he found a little more

[152] Davies 1997, 43-44.
[153] Davies 1997, 44.
[154] Parker 2003, 173.
[155] Parker 2011, 67.
[156] Parker 2003, 181, mentioning for examples three cults of Apollo at Archia (Pythios, Delphinios, Lykeios). Versnel is more flexible and suggests that the different name+epithet combinations "*may*, *but need not* have been perceived self-evidently as different functional or local manifestations or aspects of *one* god." (Versnel 2011, 77). The discussion on epithets in general: p.59-84. See also Mikalson 2010, 35-36; Polinskaya 2013, 16-21.
[157] Parker 2005, 219-220.

difficult to define, but it includes epithets of abstractions and minor divinities: Athena Nike, Aphrodite Peitho, Artemis Eukleia, and so on.[158] These personifications, which accompanied a deity, could be considered as independent divinities as well. However, here they clarified or expanded the nature of the deity.[159] The third, and final group, consists of combinations of the names of two gods/goddesses or of god/goddess and a hero/heroine, for example Artemis Hekate.[160] So epithets could specify the particular aspect of divine power.

However, the epithets for the divinities worshipped in the four sanctuaries at Sparta studied here are only to a very limited degree helpful in understanding the cult. I will discuss each case and the literary evidence for the names of the divinities in the beginning of each chapter, but a short overview is due here to demonstrate the problems of relying on divine names for understanding a cult. The first sanctuary, of Orthia, only shows the divine name and epithet - formula quite late, in the Roman period, when we begin to get epigraphic evidence for 'Artemis Orthia'. During earlier periods, Orthia was the cult recipient alone, and it seems that at some point she was associated with Artemis, and this process finally led to the combination 'Artemis Orthia'. Pausanias (3.16.11) explains the word by referring to a story of the cult image standing upright (*orthos*) in the thicket of willows. Thus, the names do not give us much information about the cult here. At the Menelaion, the recipients of the cult are addressed by their names only, giving us Helen and Menelaos. At Amyklai, Apollo (without epithet) is identified as the cult recipient first in the end of the seventh century B.C on a dedicatory inscription. Later on, Aristophanes (*Lys*. 1299-1302) refers to "the god of Amyklai". It is in the Roman period when the god is possibly associated with the epithet *tetracheir* (four-armed), although no direct evidence from the excavations at the sanctuary has been found. Finally, the sanctuary of Athena on the acropolis is associated with three epithets: Chalkioikos (of the brazen house), Chalkipylos (with the bronze doors), and Poliouchos (protectress of the city) in different sources. The two first epithets refer to the sanctuary structures, and thus give no information about the nature of the cult, while the last one suggests she had a role in protecting the city. Poliouchos is the only epithet among the four sanctuaries indicating the focus for the cult, and we must therefore look elsewhere for evidence for the nature of the cults here, that is, the literary evidence about the rituals performed at the sanctuaries, and the dedications preserved and found during excavations at these sites.

[158] Parker 2005, 221-222.
[159] Parker 2011, 78.
[160] Parker 2005, 223. Artemis Hekate: *IG* I3 383, lines 124-126.

Thus, we can see that the names are only a limited source for information about the gods. If we see dedication as communication with the divine with the help of objects, these objects could shed a light on the topics of communication the worshippers had. Here we must keep in mind Merker's argument about the ambiguity of meanings – we should explore different options for the objects' meaning with the help of literary sources, local dedications patterns and comparanda from other sanctuaries abroad.

### 1.4.3. Objects and meaning: challenges of interpretation

Finally, it is time to address some potential areas of ambiguity in the interpretation of objects below. As I have said above, in our attempt to interpret the meanings of objects, there is going to be a level of uncertainty. I will focus here on five different areas, which will come up in the following chapters as particularly challenging to interpret: initiation, fertility, women's concerns, hunting, and the role of Mistress of Animals.

Initiation is defined in classical literature on the subject as a ritualised change of status from one to another, often through a set ritual. In recent years criticism has been directed at interpreting many Greek religious rituals as *initiation* rituals.[161] In his discussion of the rituals in general, Graf defined an initiation ritual as:

> "…a ritual of some duration, conforming to the general pattern of the rites of passage, and having as its central theme, as Gilbert Lewis put it, "that of successful growth and development of the individual"[162], introducing all and sundry adolescent members of the tribe into the world of the adults, into their gender roles, their tasks, obligations and privileges as adults and at the same into the religious, spiritual and political traditions of their society."[163]

How this model might transfer to Greek rituals is not always obvious. There was no general terminology for all initiation rituals in the Greek world, and Graf lists various local terms for introducing young men and women into the adult world, such as *krypteia* in Sparta, and *ephêbeia* and *arkteia* in Athens. The variation in terminology reflects to Graf the variation between different *poleis*, and their local identities.[164] In Sparta, Graf identifies a problem with the exclusion of helots from the initiation rituals – the exclusion of *some* adolescents goes against the idea that the initiation rituals involve the whole community.[165] However, we might also argue that helots were not part of the Spartan community, and their exclusion is not as problematic as Graf argues. We will see below that many of the rituals performed at the sanctuaries we know about from the literary sources, and some of the objects found in the sanctuaries, have been interpreted as initiation rituals. However, this identification is often related to a superficial family resemblance to

[161] Dodd & Faraone 2003, and especially the articles of Graf (2003), Lincoln (2003) and Redfield (2003).
[162] Lewis 1980, 205.
[163] Graf 2003, 9.
[164] Graf 2003, 9-10. See also p. 4 for the more general terms of *mustêria*, *mueisthai*, *memueménos* used in the context of initiation into mystery cults.
[165] Graf also notes a similar exclusion in Athens, where only "upper class boys" participated in the *ephêbeia* in Hellenistic and imperial Athens (p. 11).

what an initiation ritual is thought to be, and most often, the presence of young Spartan boys or girls is enough to interpret a specific ritual as an initiation. The whipping at the altar at the sanctuary of Orthia is very often seen as an initiation ritual, although none of the literary sources describe any change in status (see below section 2.5.1). What the sources do describe is a ritual taking place in a sanctuary, at the altar, with whipping of the participants. An aspect of competition is present as well, but the boys are not described as taking on a new identity afterwards. Similarly, the presence of young boys and girls at the Hyakinthia has been seen to identify this festival also as (in part at least) an initiation ritual (see below 4.3.2). In the material evidence, the objects that have been particularly associated with initiation rituals at Sparta are the metal spirals and masks. The metal spirals are often interpreted to have been associated with hair offerings, as holders for the hair that was to be dedicated as part of initiation rites.[166] I will return to this topic in the chapter about the Amyklaion, where these objects have been found. Already Rouse collected literary evidence for cutting and dedicating hair as part of initiation rites in Greece, but he also noted a range of other situations when hair could be offered to a divinity, such as to ask for protection for children, before marriage, after birth of a son, in mourning for a death, or to ask for help in other, perilous situations.[167] Some of the literary evidence Rouse cites are later in date, or show quite a wide geographical range, but they offer us a series of other possibilities beyond initiation rites cautioning us from drawing quick conclusions. In addition, what is also less clear is if these spirals are connected with that ritual dedication of hair at all, as we have no literary evidence describing these spirals as connected with hair offerings, and neither is there anything on the objects themselves suggesting they were used to tie together hair.

When it comes to the masks found in great numbers at the sanctuary of Orthia, they have also been connected with initiation rituals.[168] Strikingly, none of the literary evidence describing rituals performed at the sanctuary mention these masks. Nevertheless, they have been connected with a performance of roles that symbolised the opposites of 'the other' and the 'youth' based on the typology of the masks. The performances were supposed to be an exploration of these opposites in connection with an initiation rite performed by Spartan youths.[169] We are missing a

[166] See section below 4.4.2. for references.
[167] Rouse 1902, 245.
[168] I discuss the interpretation of these masks below in section 2.6.2.
[169] The original excavation publication identified a number of other characters among the masks, but some, such as the warrior and old woman are more difficult to support. For discussion on the types and previous research, see section 2.6.2 below.

lot of context for this hypothetical ritual, as there may have been particular and non-iniatiatory narratives associated with the use of the masks at this sanctuary. Apart from a small fragment of a possible mask found at the Amyklaion (see section 4.4.3), no other sanctuary has produced similar material in Sparta, thus not helping us to understand the meaning of these objects. As I will discuss in more detail later, the parallels from the Near East suggested by Carter (1987) do not help us to identify the meaning of these masks at Sparta.

Similarly problematic is the interpretation of certain objects as having to do with fertility. Nicky Waugh (2009) studied the imagery of fertility and sexuality at the sanctuary of Orthia, and was unable to distinguish fertility from sexuality, or from other interpretations. Objects such as figurines depicting ithyphallic men can be interpreted in many ways, and as discussed above, the ambiguity could have been present already in antiquity as different people assigned meaning to the objects through their own personal or cultural contexts. For the nude figurines found at Corinth, Merker argued that the ambiguity of identifying them as Aphrodite, worshipper, or a courtesan, was irrelevant, as the meaning of the type would have been to invoke a sense of Aphrodite for the worshipper and to allow the worshipper to identify with the goddess.[170] This ambiguity of fertility and sexuality, and the identity of the figures depicted nude, and indeed other objects as well, cannot be conclusively solved and the ambiguity could have been purposeful in antiquity when these objects were being produced.

Some objects are often tied with the sphere of women, such as loom weights, or jewellery, and seen as demonstrating the concern the recipient was thought to have for women. It is clear that loom weights would have been a part of the work women did, rather than men, but what they would have meant as a dedication is a different matter. Apart from some personal concerns the worshipper would have wanted to communicate, we can only infer that it had something to do with the person who would have most likely used it before dedication, i.e. a woman. The presence of weaving equipment at sanctuaries discussed below is therefore used as an indication for the special group of worshippers the recipient attracted in cult. It is notable that weaving equipment are only found in the sanctuaries of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, both of which have also otherwise been connected with women. On the other hand, the only sanctuary of a male god, that of Apollo at Amyklai has not (yet at least) produced any material related to weaving, although we know from other sources that women took part in the cult. But this is not just a gender issue: at

[170] Merker 2000, 169.

the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos there is also no evidence of weaving equipment. To further complicate this, while the sanctuary of Orthia had by far the most pins of all the four sanctuaries, there were a handful found at the Amyklaion.[171] Lead models of clothing, another type of object associated with women, were found in the sanctuaries of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, but not at Amyklai or the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos.[172] The distance between Sparta and Amyklai could in part explain this difference in the dedicatory material, but the acropolis, where the sanctuary of Athena is located, is only a short walk from the sanctuary of Orthia, where these items were found in large quantities. Therefore, dedications of this type were offered to the divinities that were considered to be relevant by the worshipper, rather than by the gender of the divinity. In general, in Greece, the majority of evidence for dedications of clothing come from sanctuaries of goddesses, but clearly on the local level there were certain goddesses through to be more relevant for these types than others.[173]

Hunting and warfare are also themes difficult to distinguish archaeologically from one another. The objects used for hunting overlapped in part with those used in warfare: arrowheads and spearheads found in sanctuaries do not necessarily tell us what they were used for, or what they were meant to symbolize in each given case. We must therefore approach the interpretation with caution, and not use individual arrowheads or spearheads without any other war-related paraphernalia or literary testimonia as dedications related to warfare. However, both hunting and fighting belonged to a male sphere of activity, much in the way as loom weights belonged to the female sphere. Barringer discusses the sources comparing hunting as training for warfare, showing some overlap between these two different activities.[174] The Spartan *krypteia* involved youths spending time out in the wilderness as part of their education, and this may have involved hunting as a means of finding sustenance. The practice has also been connected to military training through accustoming the youths for the harsh conditions of a military campaign.[175] We can

[171] Kilian-Dirlmeier 1984. A list of types per location: pages 318, 322-324.
[172] See below sections 2.6.3, 3.4.2.
[173] For dedications of clothing in Greek sanctuaries, see Børns 2016, xxiii.
[174] Barringer 2001, especially chapter 1. Hunting as training for warfare on p. 11-15
[175] Evidence for the *krypteia*, including scholia to the ancient sources have been collected by Ducat 2006, chapter 9, who discusses it in the context of the Spartan educational system. Ducat is sceptical of the specific military nature of the training, as he argues then it would have included a wider range of the population and not just the selected few (p. 319-320). The evidence for hunting during the *krypteia* is late in date (p. 301).

therefore draw some conclusions about the topics on conversation the dedicator wished to have with the divinity based on these objects, even though specificity is not possible.

Finally, the identity of a goddess as a Mistress of Animals should be discussed. This female figure is in iconography associated with various animals, such as birds, lions, horses and so on. Sometimes she is depicted holding the animals with her hands on each of her sides. Christou, who wrote the defining work on this figure in Greek religion, even saw the female figure shown flanked by horses' heads as a version of this goddess.[176] In fact, she finds Sparta to have examples of all the different types of the Mistress of Animals in the Greek world.[177] This iconography has been traced to the Near East, especially Syria and the ivories found at Nimrud, whence it came to Greece to be associated with a range of female deities.[178] This depiction is interpreted to show the goddess exercising control over wild nature, and therefore it is often associated with Artemis, who as Artemis Agrotera was the goddess of the wilderness. However, there is overlap with warfare, and the Spartans are described as sacrificing to Artemis Agrotera before battle.[179] Larsen sees this overlap as a way to modify the goddess of wilderness and hunting, activities associated with aristocratic pastime, into the goddess of another pursuit, warfare.[180] Objects depicting the Mistress of Animals are found at the sanctuaries of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, showing another way that these two cults overlapped.

[176] Christou 1968, 29.
[177] Christou 1968, 28.
[178] Christou 1968, 30-31. More recently, Marinatos 2000, chapter 1 for the Near Eastern predecessors. Larson 2007, 101-102.
[179] Xen. *Hell*. 4.2.20; Plut. *Lyc*. 22.2; Thuc. 6.92.2.
[180] Larsen 2007, 102.

## 2. The Sanctuary of Orthia

In the introduction I discussed scholarly views on the militaristic character of Spartan society, and the way Spartan religion has been seen to reflect this view. In arriving at the view of Spartan religion as dominated by military concerns, scholars typically paid little attention to material remains found in sanctuaries, and it is the aim of this study to correct this situation. In the introduction, I argued that dedications, as a form of communication with the divine, can reflect the concerns of the dedicators. If Sparta was militaristic in character, we would expect to see this reflected in the concerns of dedicators either in the absolute volume of military-themed dedications or in the emphasis and relative proportion of these dedications among others. If divine powers were invoked to address the society's militaristic goals – be it success at war or maintaining the militaristic structures of society – then votive dedications may be expected to reflect these concerns. Considering the full ranges of dedications at the sanctuaries of our interest, I seek to determine whether militaristic characteristics dominate the votive assemblage. If the votive assemblage should not be dominated by the military theme, we should ask what place these concerns occupy among others and hence to what extent the society using these dedications could be viewed as militaristic.

Interpreting Spartan religion as warlike has in part been the result of focusing on the literary descriptions of rituals taking place at sanctuaries. Therefore, I will begin this chapter by discussing the sources for the rituals that were performed at the sanctuary of Orthia, and I will show how literary descriptions have led many scholars to see this site as a part of maintaining and recreating the structures of a militaristic society. I will then turn the focus towards the dedications found at the sanctuary and show how they will give a more nuanced picture of the nature of the cult.

To frame the discussion, I begin with a topographic survey of the site and history of excavations conducted there in the beginning of the 20$^{th}$ C, as this has a direct bearing on the interpretation and analysis of the archaeological data.

## 2.1. Topography

The sanctuary is located on the west bank of Eurotas river, east of the acropolis of ancient Sparta, less than a kilometre from the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos on the acropolis (see maps fig. 1-2 and site plan fig. 3). To the south-east, about 2km away, on the other side of the river and on a hill is the sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos. Amyklai is located about 5km away to the south.

Calame identifies it as a boundary sanctuary: Pausanias (3.16.7) describes the sanctuary as being located in a place called Limnaion, which is probably related to the name of one of the four or five obai of Sparta: Limnai.[181] Strabo (8.5.1) describes the area around Sparta as marshy and therefore called Limnai, the marshes. The sanctuary can therefore be considered as located on the edge of the urban centre of Sparta, although a visitor today will find that the distance between the sanctuary of Athena on the acropolis and the sanctuary of Orthia on the edges of the ancient city is relatively small, a matter of only a short walk.[182]

## 2.2. The site and history of excavations

The sanctuary of Orthia at Sparta was first excavated by the British School at Athens in the beginning of the 20th C.[183] The earliest remains of cult activity at the site are represented by the layer of burnt matter mixed with fragmented Geometric pottery (giving us the probable date of inception for cult activity), small fragments of burnt bone, and small, corroded pieces of bronze right to the west of the Archaic altar. Geometric pottery gives us the probable date of inception for cult activity in this part of the site. The only structure from this period is the small section of a wall right to the west of the burnt layer.[184] The following period saw the building of an enclosure wall and the paving of the area inside it. The walls were discovered immediately east of the Archaic altar as well as west of the early temple. Dawkins hypothetically placed the entrance to the enclosed area in the south, between the piers VIII and IX of the later Roman theatre (see fig. 3), although no remains of an entrance were found.[185] The remains of an altar from this period were discovered under and to the west of the Archaic altar, running parallel to it in a north-south

[181] Calame 2001, 157.
[182] For a recent study on the topography of ancient Sparta, see Kourinou 2000.
[183] First reports in *BSA* 1905/1906-1909/1910, followed by a publication of the site in a Dawkins 1929a. Some of the absolute dates were based on an unreliable method of comparing the depths of deposits (Dawkins 1929b, 18) and Boardman published a revised chronology for the earlier periods of the site some 30 years later (Boardman 1963).
[184] Dawkins 1929b, 5-6.
[185] Dawkins 1929b, 6-8.

orientation. No traces of a temple structure were found connected with this period, although Dawkins considers it likely that one was built in the area of the subsequent temples in the western end of the enclosure.[186] His view was perhaps based on an assumption that a temple would always accompany an altar, but examples of other sanctuaries without temples show that this needs not be the case.

After this phase, we come to a period with the building of the Archaic altar and the temple to the west. The finds associated with the usage of the temple and altar range from Geometric to Laconian II type pottery (ending in 580 B.C.).[187] A large number of clay masks were found south of the temple in the richest Archaic deposits of the site before the sanctuary was flooded and covered with a layer of sand. No enclosure walls corresponding to this period were found, although there is an indication that there once was a wall along the same line as the "Later enclosure wall", as this marks a clear limit of where finds from this period were found.[188]

The sand came from the flooding of the river Eurotas, covering the site and the altar in sand and gravel. The subsequent reorganization of the sanctuary did not involve a removal of this layer, which now formed a barrier protecting the area from future flooding.[189] It seems that the flooding did not halt activities at the sanctuary for a long time, since terracotta masks made out of the same mould were found both under and above the layer.[190] Or, alternatively, the dedications manufactured before the flooding may have survived only to be purchased and dedicated after the activities commenced again. A new temple was built partially on top of the older one, slightly to the north. The stone foundations of this temple are preserved, and they show a temple probably prostyle *in antis*, roughly 17m by 7m.[191] An Archaic capital found reused in the foundation of the Roman theatre, as well as a possible part of the pedimental sculpture (showing the mane and neck of a lion) probably belonged to that temple. Triangular reliefs showing lions placed symmetrically facing each other may reflect the pediment structure of this temple.[192] A new altar was probably constructed as well, although no remains of it are preserved. What we

[186] Dawkins 1929b, 8.
[187] Dawkins 1929b, 14. 580 B.C. is the adjusted date by Boardman for the end of Laconian II (see below for discussion on the relative and absolute dates of the pottery). Dawkins also dated the end of this phase at the sanctuary based on the style of dedicatory inscriptions on stone and pottery, which he placed in the end of the seventh century B.C. (Dawkins 1929b, 16).
[188] Dawkins 1929b, 9-15; Dickins 1929.
[189] Dawkins 1929b, 15-16.
[190] Dickins 1929, 164.
[191] Dawkins 1929b, 20-21; Dawkins 1929a, pl. II.
[192] Dawkins 1929b, 21-23, figs 10 and 11.

have are remains of altars built after the layer of sand, but the dating is later than the temple. Laconian V and VI pottery (ca. 550-250 B.C.) was found associated with the debris from the use of the altar. A new enclosure wall was also built during this period, the longest part of which was excavated to the west. Another part was uncovered to the south, and some to the east of the altar. No trace of an entrance to the area was found from this structure either.[193] This phase also saw the building of a drain, running east to west. The excavators dated its construction to mid-third century B.C., and it went out of use by the time of the construction of the Roman theatre, which cut into it and reused some of the drain's roofing slabs.[194]

There seems to have been some rebuilding during the Hellenistic period, since a number of stamped tiles have been found dating to the third and second centuries B.C., some of which have stamps with ΔΑΜΟΣΙΟΣ ΑΘΑΝΑΣ ΝΙ--- or ΦΙΛΟΚΛΗ. These are tile stamps, indicating that public funds were used for their manufacture, suggesting a public nature for the cult here.[195] There is also a stele with a relief of a Doric temple accompanied by a dedicatory inscription.[196] Woodward dates it to the second to the early first century B.C.[197] Some sort of permanent seating arrangements existed in the first century B.C., when a stone seat was dedicated by Soixiadas. This one ended up in the foundation of the Roman theatre while another stone seat was reused in the Roman altar.[198]

The last main building works at the sanctuary involved the Roman altar and the theatre. Dawkins is unsure about the date of the altar, which was built on top of its predecessors. He only writes that it could be earlier than the theatre, or later.[199] At some point a drain was built in front of the temple, running north to south, and since the theatre cuts into it, it must be earlier.[200] Then at some time after 225 A.D. the theatre was built, arranged so that the temple took the place of

[193] Dawkins 1929b, 24-25.
[194] Dawkins 1929b, 28-31.
[195] Dawkins 1929b, 32, 143. See also discussion below for the Menelaion (section 3.2), and the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos (section 5.3.), where similar stamps have been found.
[196] Dawkins 1929b, 34-35; Woodward 1929a, 297-298.
[197] Woodward 1929a, 297.
[198] Dawkins 1929b, 36; Woodward 1929a, 355, no 141. In the altar: Dawkins 1929b, 37.
[199] Dawkins 1929b, 34.
[200] Dawkins 1929b, 36.

the proscenium.[201] Woodward suggested it might have been built after the Herulian raid of 267 A.D. after which the theatre in the city was also rebuilt.[202]

To summarize, the earliest activity at the sanctuary dates to the Geometric period and cultic activity continued well over a thousand years until the Roman period. Three different altars were built in the same location, parallel to each other. During the earliest period of activity there probably was no temple at the sanctuary, but subsequently two temples were built, facing east towards the altar. When the first theatre was built, the temple took the place of the proscenium, although the main activity likely took place at the altar (I will recount the literary sources for rituals shortly). While it is not unusual to find theatres in association with sanctuaries, the layout where the theatre is built around the altar and temple is unique. It emphasizes the spectacle of the rituals and allows for a large crowd to witness the activity. However, there is nothing in particular in these architectural arrangements that might indicate a militaristic character of the cult.

In the main publication of the excavations there was little emphasis on the contexts of finds. The methodologies used today on archaeological excavations were only taking shape during that time, and exact find spots were often not recorded, nor even exact quantities of specific types of finds (such as for the lead figurines, where we only have partial information recorded on the different types). Recently, Francesca Luongo has published a short article outlining some of the data she has extracted from the excavation notebooks, including some sketches of individual trenches. Her intention is to build a database based on the notebooks, and this will likely prove invaluable for future research on this site and the history of the excavations.[203]

[201] The date for the building works is not confirmed, and the *terminus post quem* is provided by an inscription of a stele found reused in the foundations of the theatre. Dawkins 1929b, 38; Woodward 1929a, 293 and 335, no 71; *IG* V.1.314. Dawkins gives the date of 225 A.D. although in the same publication Woodward places it to ca. 230 A.D. (Woodward 1929a, 293). The date in *IG* is ca 245 A.D. For a discussion about the uncertainty of the dating, see Woodward, 1907/1908, 98.
[202] Dawkins 1929b, 38.
[203] Luongo 2015.

### 2.3. The name of the goddess and deities worshipped

The question of identity of the goddess worshipped at the sanctuary has been a matter of debate ever since the excavations began to uncover dedicatory inscriptions. The epigraphical evidence showed various ways of spelling the name Orthia, while Artemis appears in the record for the first time only during the first century A.D.[204] Thus the excavators argued that Orthia was originally a separate deity and only later became associated, or identified, with Artemis.[205] There are three categories of evidence used in this debate: literary, epigraphical, and archaeological.

Calame explored the connection between Orthia and Artemis based on the literary sources, and placed the cult of Orthia into the context of Greek cults of Artemis using the evidence of Pausanias regarding the cult image. Pausanias (3.16.7-11) writes that the Spartans considered the cult image of Orthia to be the one taken by Orestis and Iphigenia at Tauris, contrasting this with the Athenian version of the myth where the statue ended up in Brauron (Paus. 1.23.7; 1.33.1). I will return to the other evidence for the cult image in the following section. What is of note is that with this myth Pausanias connects the cult of Orthia (or Artemis Orthia, as he says) with a cult of Artemis at Brauron, which includes rituals performed by young girls.[206] There is also further indirect evidence for a connection between Orthia and cults of Artemis elsewhere. Pausanias (3.16.11) also tells us that the Spartans call the goddess Lygodesma (willow-bound) because her image was found in a thicket of willows (identified as *vitex* or *agnus castus*), which made the statue stand upright (orthos).[207] Calame notes that the same tree is also connected with the cult of Artemis Cedreatis at Orchomenos (Paus. 8.13.2.), and that other cults of Artemis are associated with uncultivated trees like the *vitex* or *agnus castus.*[208] The tree was also connected with medicinal qualities related to chastity and fertility, and these contrasting could be related to the transition of the young girls to adulthood under the auspices of Orthia.[209]

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[204] Rose 1929, 403. Orthia: 'upright'. Pausanias explains the name as a reference to the appearance of her cult statue (Paus. 3.16.7-11). Orthia was associated with Artemis elsewhere already during the Classical period (Kaaskard Falb 2009, 145).
[205] Rose 1929, 402.
[206] Calame 2001, 162.
[207] Calame notes that a similar *aition* is also told of the statue of Hera on Samos: Ath. 15.672de; Paus. 7.4.4; 8.23.5.
[208] Calame 2001, 163.
[209] Calame 2001, 164; King 1983, 122-123. The edition of Calame's book I am using is from 2001, although the book was first published (in French) in 1977, therefore leading to a somewhat strange situation where Calame 2001 refers to King 1983, who in turn refers to Calame 1977, which is partially equal to Calame 2001.

Connecting divinities with Artemis is not unique to Sparta. On Aegina, literary sources (Paus. 2.30.2; Ant. Lib. *Met.* 40) connect Artemis with Aphaia, and Britomartis, who is said to be later renamed Diktynna. At Athens, Diktynna was a surname of Artemis, but other sources separate her from Artemis and describe her as a distinct divinity.[210] At Sparta Pausanias (3.14.2) mentions a sanctuary of Artemis Issoria, which he describes as also being a sanctuary of Britomartis of Crete. This association between the goddesses probably had to do with similar characteristics assigned to them: they are unmarried women and interested in hunting and running.[211] In the case of Orthia, already Rose suggested she was an independent goddess later identified with Artemis, and explained this by their shared associations with fertility and animals as attested by the archaeological evidence found during the excavations.[212] While we do not have any myths describing Orthia as separate from Artemis, the fact that the inscriptions on small items and roof tiles specify the recipient of cult as Orthia, and only together with Artemis on the Roman period stelae (and these are never addressed to Artemis alone!), strongly suggests that she was thought to be separate from Artemis in the beginning.[213]

The archaeological evidence used in the debate on the deity's identity are the lead figurines of deer, an animal commonly associated with Artemis in iconography, which appear among the dedications during the sixth century B.C. (Lead III-IV, 580-500 B.C.).[214] This does not necessarily mean that Orthia was fully connected with Artemis at this time – other similarities between Orthia and Artemis may have caused the attributes of Artemis to be associated with Orthia during this early date, only for the two goddesses to be officially assimilated during the Roman period when the inscriptions confirm this. This association with attributes of Artemis without equation is further supported by the fact that lead figurines depicting deer have also been found at the sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos (in the group dated from Laconian III onwards, i.e. from 580 B.C. onwards).[215] It could be that during the sixth century B.C. new iconographical motifs become associated with local Spartan goddesses in general, perhaps as a way to connect them with other, panhellenic goddesses and their attributes. There are also other similarities between

[210] Surname of Artemis: Eur. *Hipp*. 145-150; 1127-1130; Eur. *Iph. Taur*. 126-127; Aristoph. *Frogs*. 1355-1362. Separate from Artemis: Call. *Art*. 3.189-203; Diod. Sic. 5.76.3; Paus. 3.14.2.
[211] Polinskaya 2012, 178 for discussion on Aphaia and Artemis.
[212] Rose 1929, 402.
[213] Rose 1929, 401, n 11; For the range of spellings on smaller dedications: Hondius and Woodward 1919/1920 - 1920/1921, 116.
[214] Wace 1929, 281-282. For recent discussion, see Kaaskard Falb 2009.
[215] See section 3.4.2. below.

the sanctuaries of Orthia and the Menelaion, and the goddesses worshipped there, and they seem to have shared functions as protectors of girls (I will return to this below). This could explain the simultaneous appearance of an attribute of panhellenic goddess Artemis, who also oversaw transitions of girls to womanhood. We should also consider the possibility that deer was not an exclusive attribute of Artemis in the Archaic period.[216] It could be that Orthia was associated with hunting independent of this characteristic of Artemis, and only later the similarities between the two led to Artemis Orthia becoming the cult recipient. It is not possible to say with certainty how this developed throughout the centuries of activity at the sanctuary. But since Orthia is the earliest recipient of dedications, and since the name continues to be used in the Roman period, I will use the name Orthia throughout here.

In addition, there are other indications that the character of Orthia may have been complex early on. There are some references to Eileithyia found among the finds at the sanctuary. Pausanias notes that there was a sanctuary of Eileithyia not far from the sanctuary of Orthia (Paus. 3.17.1). We do not know where exactly this sanctuary was located, but 20 roof tiles (from Hellenistic to Roman period) found during the excavations of the Orthia sanctuary had her name stamped on them.[217] In addition, a bronze die dated to the sixth century B.C. with a dedicatory inscription Ἐλευθιας was found here, along with a seventh century B.C. bronze pin head with Ἐλευθια inscribed on it.[218] The find spot for the latter was noted as ”towards the east of the site”.[219] It is therefore not possible to say whether all dedications from the sanctuary were meant for Orthia, or if some were intended for Eileithyia, or indeed for both, as the two may have shared the space before the construction of a building dedicated to Eileithyia as testified by the stamped roof tiles. We should also consider the possibility that Eileithyia was a later addition, a separation of aspects, where Orthia was originally the recipient of worship related to childbirth, but at a later period this aspect was taken over by a “specialist” deity. We will see that there are very few dedications relating to childbirth during later periods, and this may have been due to a separation

[216] Bevan 1986, 109, on several goddesses taking on the earlier Mistress of Animals -role, including being associated with deer. She notes that during the Archaic period the association with Artemis becomes more exclusive, but she cites the finds from the sanctuary of Orthia for the date of this association being cemented around and after 600 B.C. (Bevan 1986, 110).
[217] George & Woodward 1929, 143. Illustrated in: Dawkins 1929a, fig 18 p 33.
[218] Die: Woodward 1929b, 370; Hondius & Woodward 1919/1920-1920/1921, 102 (who date it slightly earlier than in *IG* V 1, 252a, giving sixth century B.C. as the date). On one side of the die there are the letters o and θ, which Hodkinson sees as an abbreviation of ‘Orthia’ (Hodkinson 2000, 289). Pin: Kilian 1978, 220.
[219] Hondius & Woodward 1919/1920-1920/1921, 102.

of responsibilities, where Eileithyia is given a separate area nearby, where any childcare and childbirth concerns of the worshippers would be addressed. However, the early date for the two inscribed bronze objects suggests that this process of separation either happened quite early on in the history of the sanctuary, that the goddesses shared the aspect of childbirth, or that Eileithyia was worshipped in the same area from early on, and that childbirth-related dedications were all meant for her. This is of course impossible to determine, but the important factor here is that in this sanctuary, or right next to it, rituals of dedication related to childbirth were taking place.

**2.4. Cult image**

There is no doubt that a military character of a cult would be strongly suggested if the cult image of a deity used the iconography of a warrior. There is some evidence to suggest that that was the case at the sanctuary of Orthia.

No material remains of a potential cult image were found during the excavations. However, we have some literary sources describing it: Pausanias describes it as an old *xoanon* brought to Sparta from the Taurians by Orestes and Iphigenia (Paus 3.16.7). It was small enough to be easily carried by the priestess during the whipping ritual (3.16.10). Pausanias also notes that "They call it not only Orthia, but also Lygodesma (Willow-bound), because it was found in a thicket of willows, and the encircling willow made the image stand upright" (3.16.11, transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb edition).

The goddess is possibly depicted on some third century coins, minted during Cleomenes III (227-222 B.C.) (see fig. 20). What we can see on the coin is a standing figure, wearing a helmet, and brandishing a spear in one hand, and holding a bow in the other. Next to its feet is a goat. For Flower, this depiction of the armed goddess suggests the goddess' martial nature at the sanctuary of Orthia.[220] He points out that the cult image of Orthia in Messene was not depicted armed, therefore meaning that it is the militaristic Spartan context that has the goddess take on a military role.[221] Not everyone agrees with the identification of the figure depicted on the coin, and it has also been identified as the statue of Apollo at Amyklai.[222] The attributes could suit both Apollo and Orthia, and there are other depictions of the statue at Amyklai which resemble this coin (section 4.3.1. on other evidence of the cult image at Amyklai). Grunauer von Hoerschelmann argues that

[220] Flower 2009.
[221] Flower 2018, 433.
[222] Lacroix 55, pl 1, 16; Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner 1964, 59.

since Cleomenes tried to restore some Lykourgan customs, it would be natural for him to choose Orthia for the coin.[223] Alroth accepted the coin as a depiction of Orthia, but highlighted that there may have been several cult statues at the sanctuary throughout its history and that the one on the coin may not have been the earliest one.[224]

The excavators of the sanctuary suggested that some of the rigid standing figurines in terracotta and bone depicted the cult image of the goddess, and Alroth follows their interpretation.[225] Alroth further speculates that the simple, rigidly depicted cult image could have been at times dressed in a helmet and other attributes for cultic reasons, and thus the difference between the small simple figurines and the figure on the coin would not be a problem.[226] However, her interpretation makes quite a few assumptions with little supporting evidence. We simply do not know if the small figurines depicted the cult image, and the armed goddess with a bow and a goat – both common attributes of Artemis – could have been reference to the Artemis the Spartans sacrificed to in connection with military campaigns, and not Orthia.[227] Here it is worth noting that the evidence for the cult images of Orthia, Apollo, and Athena discussed in this dissertation all appear very similar on the numismatic evidence: all show a pillar-like figure facing right, wearing a helmet, and holding a bow, while appearing to throw a spear. If the identification of the statue of Orthia is correct, it seems that all these three major cults at Sparta had very similar cult images, suggesting similarities in cult. We will see that there are indeed military connections in all the cults, but that there are also many differences when we consider the literary and archaeological evidence together.

[223] Grunauer von Hoerschelmann, 1978, 12, 16. Also Romano (1980, 119, 121).
[224] Alroth 1989, 44. Romano (1980, 119) thinks that either the image on the coin was the original cult image made for the sanctuary, or a close facsimile of the original.
[225] Alroth 1989, 45.
[226] Alroth 1989, 46.
[227] Xen. *Hell*. 4.2.20; *Lac*. 13.8.

### 2.5. Rituals: literary evidence

There are several literary sources for rituals that took place at the sanctuary. I will first discuss the ritual of whipping at the altar involving Spartan boys, and then the choral dances of girls often associated (but without full certainty) with the sanctuary. We will see that especially the whipping of boys has led scholars to identify the cult as a military one.

#### 2.5.1. Whipping at the altar[228]

The earliest literary source mentioning the sanctuary is Xenophon,[229] who briefly describes a ritual taking place at the sanctuary, where boys would attempt to steal as many cheeses as they could from the altar, with other boys equipped with whips ready to punish the thieves (Xen. *Lac*. 2.9). This section follows a short treatise on the role of stealing in the upbringing of Spartan boys and is shown as another example of how an endurance of pain and swiftness of foot will give great rewards.

Much later, Plutarch gives a differing account of the activities at the sanctuary of Orthia. In his short references to the ritual the youths are whipped by the altar of the goddess in a test of endurance, during which he says he had seen many die (Plut. *Vit. Lyc*. 18.1; *Mor*. 239C-D).[230] In *Aristides* (*Vit. Arist*. 17.6-8) he describes the origins of the ritual in the sacrifices prior to the battle of Plataia. Pausanias was in the middle of sacrificing and praying, when a group of Lydians fell upon him and threw away the offerings. Pausanias and his attendants chased them away with blows from sacrificial staves and goads, and this is the reason why youths are beaten at the altar at Sparta. This beating was then followed by a procession of Lydians. No other source makes a connection with the battle – nor with the Lydians – a detail that Pausanias would undoubtedly have mentioned had it been a widespread tradition.[231] Although Plutarch here does not specify

[228] I discuss here the evidence relevant to the chronological scope of this study. Kennell 1995 has collected all the evidence in his appendix 1, including many later Roman period sources, which refer the whipping or beating without direct association with the sanctuary.

[229] The authorship of *the Constitution of the Lakedaemonians* has been long debated. See Lipka (2002, 5-8) for a review of the arguments and a bibliography on the matter. The authorship of chapter 14 has been more recently discussed by Humble (2004).

[230] For the other sources for the supposed death of some of the boys, see critical assessment of the Roman sources in Kennell 1995, 73-75. Kennell writes that the (Roman period) rumours of dying during the ritual "served to strengthen the symbolism by blurring the distinction between ritual and reality" (p.75).

[231] Graf connects the term Lydian to sources describing the origin of pastoral poetry, where Diomedes uses the words Lydiasts and Bucolists for those performing pastoral poetry (Graf 1985, 88-89). Ducat argues that the boys made a procession after the whipping, dressed in girls' long dresses, but there is no evidence for this. He is inferring long girls' dresses from the idea that the Lydians referred to ideas of luxury and

where exactly in Sparta this take place, it is safe to assume he means the one at the sanctuary of Orthia, as the earlier evidence, and Plutarch himself, has discussed whipping only at the altar of Orthia.

Plutarch also makes no reference to the role of the priestess and the *xoanon* of the goddess, both of which are later described by Pausanias. Pausanias traces the tradition to pre-Lycurgan times, while trying to make an argument for the *xoanon* of Artemis being the one Orestes and Iphigenia took from the Taurians. Before Lycurgus, the *xoanon* caused insanity and violent behaviour, until a human sacrifice was instituted at the altar. It was Lycurgus then who instituted the flagellation of Pausanias' day: the priestess carried the *xoanon* of Artemis, while the Spartan youths were whipped near the altar, staining it with blood. If any of the scourgers were being too gentle on a youth due to their beauty or high status, the *xoanon* would grow heavy for the priestess to carry (Paus. 3.16.7-11). Both Plutarch and Pausanias emphasize the violence and endurance of the boys, while in Xenophon the emphasis was on skills needed for stealing and the quick action that the ritual favoured. Combining this with Xenophon's testimony of the ritual of stealing from the altar for boys, it seems that the goddess at some point became a deity associated with boys growing up, at least from the Classical period onwards. A similar development can be seen at the sanctuary of Artemis Hemera at Lousoi, where during the Hellenistic period athletic games were introduced for boys and men, and a marble statue of a young boy testifies to a previously absent aspect of protectress of boys and young men.[232] At the sanctuary of Orthia, rituals related to boys and growing up are already practiced in the Classical period, and an addition of other games, and especially musical contests, suggests that the goddess' protection over boys growing up was no longer related to only physical endurance or skills. In addition, the nature of the whipping ritual had changed substantially by the time Pausanias visited the city, and it had an important role in the cultural life of Sparta. Kennell notes that the sickle dedications on *stelae* found at the sanctuary are dated mostly to the second century AD, and completely dominate the epigraphical evidence from Sparta throughout their history.[233] While we could dismiss the dominance of the sickle dedication *stelae* by stating the fact that much of Spartan city centre has not been excavated, the dedications from the Roman period

effeminacy of eastern peoples. To dress up in this manner meant that the boys dressed up as girls, the ultimate role reversal (Ducat 2006, 255-256).

[232] Reichel & Wilhelm 1901, 45, 47; Pretzler 1999, 50.

[233] Kennell 1995, 83.

still strongly dominate the epigraphical evidence within the sanctuary of Orthia.[234] Only two of these *stelae* date from the Classical-Hellenistic periods, and the rest are Roman in date (see below section 2.5.3).[235] Thus, the Roman period ritual (and perhaps more importantly, displaying participation in it on an inscription), had a very important role within the sanctuary, and probably also the city as a whole.[236]

Altogether, these literary descriptions of activities taking place at the altar have taken a central place for researchers studying Spartan religion in general, and this site in particular. The sanctuary's central place in Spartan society is emphasized especially through the initiatory nature of this ritual. I will return to the topic of initiation shortly, but first let use see how scholars have placed this ritual in the discussion of Spartan religion.

Parker places the ritual of whipping at the sanctuary in the wider context of the education of the Spartiate youths, during which they would get whipped if caught stealing food. For him, the ritual was "a display of such 'theft amid blows'…at the altar.[237] The sanctuary therefore became "centrepiece of a festival of civic importance".[238] Parker also lists this ritual among those features of Spartan religion, which distinguished them from other Greeks.[239]

Flower briefly mentions the goddess Orthia as one of the unique aspects of Spartan religion. He follows Carter in mentioning the goddess' Phoenician origins and describes the site as a place for fertility rituals and possible ritual marriage.[240] In a later article, Flower describes the changes he detects in the different sources for rituals taking place at the sanctuary; during the late sixth to fifth century a ritual took place where the masks found during the excavations were in use (see below in section 2.6.2). By the time of Xenophon in the fourth century this had morphed into the cheese stealing ritual at the altar, which in turn changed into an endurance test for boys during the late Hellenistic period with a theatre erected for spectators in the Roman period.[241]

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[234] For an overview of Spartan topography (including a survey of rescue excavations within the city), see Kourinou 2000, who highlights the imbalance of the archaeological record we have today.
[235] There are 75 of these inscriptions from the first century B.C. onwards, and in addition there are some smaller fragments, mostly from the Roman period (Woodward 1929a, 293).
[236] Kennell further discusses the role of the ritual in the Roman period in the context of the Spartans' relationship with their idealised past, and the legends associated with Lykourgos (Kennell 1995, 83-84).
[237] Parker 1989, 148.
[238] Parker 1989, 148.
[239] Parker 1989, 148.
[240] Flower 2009, 211. Carter 1987. This is mostly based on the masks found at the sanctuary, which are discussed below.
[241] Flower 2018, 436.

Flower sees the sanctuary as the main location for Sparta's rites of passage and initiation, and places these in a martial context with what he thinks is an armed cult image as described above.[242]

The most comprehensive work on Spartan religion is Richer's monograph from 2012. While previous research has mainly focused on the literary sources, Richer does refer to the dedications found in the sanctuary when they are relevant. For him, the cult was mainly focused on initiation into adulthood; for boys this meant the rituals at the altar described above, and for girls he refers to the lead dedications depicting clothing found at the sanctuary (see below in section 2.6.3). Calame also saw the ritual as an initiation rite, with the familiar tripartite structure of separation (from the old order, i.e. childhood), segregation and symbolic death (whipping), followed by reintegration (to adulthood).[243]

Thus, we can see that for Parker and Flower the site was strongly connected with initiation of boys and skills needed in warfare. Richer places less emphasis on the military nature of the cult, but focuses still on the initiatory rituals. Here it is worth discussing the change we can see in the details of the whipping ritual. Most of the sources describing it date from a quite late period, and it is with the help of Xenophon that we can place ritual whipping by the altar to the Classical period. In this case, we can observe changes in the explanations for and in the details of the ritual, so we should be cautious about using later sources to reconstruct earlier ritual practices. Kennell (1995), mentioned above, addressed the issue of using Roman sources for understanding earlier Spartan history in his influential book on the Spartan educational system. Kennell's method was to trace the nature of the system 'quasi-archaeologically', by starting with the latest evidence and going back in time, as opposed to combining evidence from different centuries in order to paint a picture of the whole.[244] He dates the change in the ritual, from the cheese-stealing competition into the whipping endurance contests to the Hellenistic phase of the Spartan *agoge*.[245] Influenced by philosophical ideas of courage and endurance, the ritual was transformed into an endurance contest above all.[246] The reforms of Agis and Cleomenes III in the third century B.C. claimed to be

[242] Flower 2018, 431.
[243] Calame 2001, 207.
[244] Kennell 1995, 4.
[245] Kennell 1995, 111. Ducat takes a different approach and uses Roman period sources to understand the testimony from Xenophon (Ducat 2006, 252). For him, the description of Lydians has to do with the type of dress the boys were to wear in order to look like girls, forming a part of role-reversal known from initiation rites (Ducat 2006, 255). This seems unlikely, and I would agree with Kennell in separating evidence from different periods of time. Ducat explores parallels for this ritual on p. 256-259.
[246] Kennell 1995, 111-114.

restoring the ancestral constitution of Lykourgos, and the transformation of the ritual at the altar was an important part of this period of change.[247]

The ritual has often been described as an initiation ritual. I have discussed in the introduction the ways this description can be problematic for rituals in ancient Greece. Whether rituals performed at the sanctuary of Orthia should in fact be seen as initiatory is not straightforward. Graf emphasizes the change over time for the ritual: the earlier cheese-stealing ritual involved a mock-battle, while the later one fits better with the idea of an initiation ritual with flagellation.[248] So during the pre-Roman period relevant to the present study, the ritual at the altar does not fit very well the concept of an *initiation* ritual. But is this ritual still related to warfare? This is also not straightforward. The whipping at the altar has an element of violence, and avoiding blows in the ritual as described by Xenophon could be associated with skills useful in battle. But trickery and stealing are common elements in myths in Greek religion, and the only association of stealing with warfare here is if we extend this to the practise of stealing food during the *krypteia*, and if we see the activities during the *krypteia* as all having to do with warfare.[249] None of the sources for the ritual at the altar specify that the boys were being initiated into something afterwards, so it is perhaps more probable that the ritual formed a part of the general education, rather than the culmination. We know of other activities they took part in that have a competitive or endurance aspect, and there is nothing in the sources that would suggest that this particular ritual was the culmination.

In addition, the ritual at the altar for Spartan boys at the altar was potentially not the only one performed here. There is some, albeit limited and complicated, evidence for the performance of choral songs at the sanctuary. I will discuss that evidence next.

[247] Kennell 1995, 114. Kennell's approach has, however, received some criticism. Ducat thinks it unreasonable to assume that the education system would have had a break before restoration, making two or three generations go without the public education. Instead, Ducat suggests that the 'restoration' meant a reformation of a system that was not thought to function well (Ducat 2006, ix-xi with references to others arguing for a break in the education system).
[248] Graf 2003, 16.
[249] Graf 2003, 20 sees the *agoge* as a whole as "in some respects" falling within a definition of an initiation and sees it as an "efficient military training" (p. 15).

### 2.5.2. Choral songs

A debate about choruses of young women at the sanctuary of Orthia has centred around Alcman's fragmentary poem *Partheneion*, which describes choral dances of young girls. The poem has attracted a lot of attention since the publication of the Louvre papyrus containing it in 1863.[250] There are numerous recent treatises of the poem, and there is no enough space here to look at it in detail.[251] So, I will focus on two aspects of it: its possible connection to the cult of Orthia, and what we know about choral songs performed by Spartan girls.

The connection between the poem and the sanctuary relies on the interpretation of one word, ὀρθρίαι. The relevant passage (Alc. Par. 60-64) is:

| | |
|---|---|
| ταὶ Πεληάδες γὰρ ἅμιν | for the Pleiads |
| Ὀρθρίαι φᾶρος φεροίσαις νύκτα δι᾽ ἀμβροσίαν | as we carry a plough to Orthia[1] |
| ἄτε σήριον | rise through the ambrosial night like the star |
| ἄστρον ἀυηρομέναι μάχονται. | Sirius and fight against us |
| | (transl. D. A. Campbell, Loeb edition) |

Page wrote the first comprehensive study of the whole poem, and put forward suggestions for the meaning of the word ὀρθρίαι: either it is nominative plural in apposition to the Pleiades, and meaning "at daybreak", or dative singular, being the epithet of a goddess (for whom a plough or a veil is intended), or it refers to the goddess Orthia: a scholion (A 13) notes that this means Orthia, the goddess of our sanctuary, but this Page ruled out this explanation because it does not fit the meter of the poem.[252] If it is an epithet of a goddess, a candidate can be found later in the poem, line 87: Aotis, the dawn goddess.[253] Following Page, the debate over the identity of the goddess described in the poem produced a series of other candidates.[254]

[250] Egger 1963. The main comprehensive studies on the poem: Page 1951, Calame 1983, Davies 1991, Ferrari 2008.
[251] Most recently with further references on the history of research of this poem: Priestley 2007; Luginbill 2009.
[252] Page (1951) establishes the different suggestions on p. 76-78. The scholia of the Louvre papyrus of the Partheneion are transcribed in Page 1951, 11-16.
[253] Page 1951, 76.
[254] Luginbill 2009, 39 for references.

The awkwardness of the spelling if this was Orthia could potentially be explained by the range of different spellings of Orthia's name among the epigraphic material discussed above in section 2.3.[255] Recently Luginbill (2009) has argued that ὀρθρίαι refers to Orthia as Page suggested, and that since the poem is rich in puns in general, the double meaning of the word as daybreak and Orthia needs not cause anxiety in scholars: it refers to the girls and their pre-dawn mission of dancing, as well as being an allusion to the goddess whom they themselves and the boys are about to worship.[256] His interpretation of the poem in general is that it should be seen as an "introduction for the endurance contests that took place before the altar of Orthia as part of the initiation rites of Spartan young men, thereby serving to integrate the young women of the same age-class into the ceremony in a formalized way." and then the identification of Orthia can be supported.[257]

Luginbill also argues that the original performance of the poem took place during the Gymnopaidiai festival, and later the endurance contest by the altar at the sanctuary of Orthia was a part of, and the culmination of, a series of rituals of initiation for the Spartan males into the Spartan army.[258] The sense of haste in the poem refers to a sense of the mission, to introduce the male rituals as the sun was about to come up, and the ritual by the altar to begin. The discipline of the chorus mirrors that required of the military unit, further emphasizing the connection between the girls' chorus and the initiation ritual of the boys leading to their role as members of the army.[259]

The word φᾶρος can mean both a plough or a veil/cloak, and both fit the meter.[260] The agricultural reference of the plough has been used to connect it to the cult of Orthia, and especially the stelae with recesses for sickles, dedicated after a competition held at the sanctuary (see below section 2.5.3).[261] The problem with this is that the stelae are much later (fourth/third century B.C. for the earliest, but the majority are Roman) than the poem

[255] This was already suggested by Page (1951, 77).
[256] Luginbill 2009, 39. As Luginbill points out, there is a wide range of different spellings of the goddess' name among the epigraphic evidence (Rose 1929, 400).
[257] Luginbill 2009, 27-28.
[258] Luginbill 2009, 29-30.
[259] Luginbill 2009, 36-37. Dancing as helping with military discipline, Calame 2001, 224.
[260] Many studies have focused on the meaning of the word. See e.g. West 1965, Calame 1977, 2: 128-129; Hutchinson 2001, 91; Priestley 2007. Priestley (2007, 178) suggests that the meaning of the word was already debated in antiquity.
[261] Page 1951, 78; Luginbill 2009, 41.

(dated to the seventh/sixth century B.C.). The interpretation of φᾶρος being a cloak, or a robe, was argued strongly by Priestley, who draws parallels to the *chiton* woven for Apollo at Amyklai (see below section 4.3), the peplos presented to Athena at Athens, as well as the lead models of textiles and weaving tools found at the sanctuary of Orthia (see below section 2.6.3).[262] Likewise, as he did with the word ὀρθρίαι, Luginbill sees this double meaning as a pun, with a veil, or a cloak, being the primary meaning. This cloak functioned as a reference to the cloaks the Spartan youths would get to wear when they were initiated into adulthood, and the army. The plough, in turn, referred to agricultural benefits of successful invasion (especially of Messenia, described as 'good to plough, good to plant' by Tyrtaeus (5.3), or in more general terms the state system that supported the hoplite citizen class the youths were about to enter. In addition, there could be an sexual reference in the φᾶρος, acting as the item you put on, and then do the job of a φᾶρος on the girls who are here singing and about to marry.[263] While the question of identification of ὀρθρίαι will undoubtedly continue to attract scholarly attention, Luginbill's suggestion of it as an intentional double meaning is a convincing hypothesis.

Is there any other evidence for choral dances performed at the sanctuary by young girls? Calame discusses the cult of Artemis and associated choral songs and dancing from the point of view of initiation.[264] The main evidence he uses comes from Plutarch: he describes the sanctuary as the location for Helen's abduction by Theseus in three different versions (Plut. *Thes*. 31): the first two tell the myth where either Idas and Lynceus kidnapped Helen and brought her to Theseus, or where her father Tyndareus entrusted Helen to Theseus, fearing that Enasphorus would kidnap her. The third version Plutarch considers to be the most likely of the three. In it, Theseus and Peirithous kidnapped her as she was dancing in the temple of Artemis Orthia and fled away with her. The two made a pact that one of them would get Helen as a wife, and would then help the other in getting a wife. Theseus won Helen, but since she was not yet old enough for marriage, they left her in the care of his friend Aphidnus. Following this, the Dioscuri manage to get her back by waging war against Theseus. In addition to these (late) associations of the sanctuary with

[262] Priestley 2007, 189-190.
[263] Luginbill 2009, 41-42.
[264] Calame 2001. Chapter 3 focuses especially on rituals and the chorus. Sparta is discussed on p. 141-205, and the sanctuary of Orthia on p. 256-169.

dancing, Calame brings up the myth described in Pindar's *Olympian* 3, where a goddess called Orthosia is mentioned. Herakles was told to bring a hind with golden horns to Eurystheus, a hind Taygete had dedicated to Orthosia (*Ol*. 3. 28-30). Calame highlights how Artemis is described in the same poem independently of Orthosia, and only in the scholia does Orthosia get associated with Artemis.[265] Through Taygete, the myth connects Orthosia with the image of the Nymph and myths related to rape of adolescents. The rape of Taygete by Zeus resulted in a son called Lakedaimon, a supposed founder of Sparta. This all gives Calame further indication that the cult of Orthia was connected with the initiation of girls.[266] However, he admits that there is no direct evidence for rituals performed by young girls at the sanctuary.[267]

### 2.5.3. Epigraphic evidence

In addition to these literary sources describing a ritual at the altar, we also have epigraphic evidence that games were held for boys. Two inscriptions fall within the chronological scope of this dissertation: the earliest inscription (*IG* V 1 255) is dated to the fourth (or early third century) B.C., and the next (*IG* V1, 256) to the second (or early first century) B.C. Both of them include cavities for the attachment of sickles as symbols of won competitions, and both record victories in games for boys.[268] That there is such a long period between the two is not easily explained. We might suggest that there is a chance of preservation at play, that similar stelae were dedicated at the same time, and during the third century, but none have survived. Alternatively, and this is what Ducat prefers, is that the occasion for the first stele was so exceptional, that it demanded a new type of dedication. The presence of 5 recesses for sickles singles it out as a celebration of an exceptional victory among even the later stelae.[269] The nature of the competitions is not clear. The earlier inscription (*IG* V 1 255) only specifies that the winner Arexippos dedicated these [the sickles] to Orthia, for all the boys

[265] Calame 2001, 161.
[266] Calame 2001, 161-162, footnote 217 with further references.
[267] Calame 2001, 162. Pausanias (3.18.15) tells that scene of kidnapping is depicted on the throne of Apollo at Amyklai.
[268] The earlier: Tillyard 1905/1906, 380, no 48; Woodward 1907/1908, 101, no 48; Woodward 1929a, 296, no 1; the later: Tillyard 1905/1906, 380, no 47; Woodward 1907/1908, 94-95, no 47; Woodward 1929a, 297-298, no 2. Rose connected the sickle to agricultural growth (Rose 1929, 406). Ducat prefers a date towards 350 B.C. for the earlier one (Ducat 2006, 210).
[269] Ducat 2006, 210-211.

to see.[270] The later one (*IG* V 1 256) is similar, and Ducat speculated that it may have been dedicated during a time when there was reorganization of the ritual, thus establishing the practice of dedicating these stelae that continued during the Roman period.[271]

The later inscriptions refer to games called μῶα (μοῦσα), which appear to be some sort of musical contests.[272] This is perhaps related to the building of permanent seating by the first century B.C., when the stone seat was dedicated by Soixiadas.[273]

Thus, the connection with boys continues at the site to the Hellenistic and Roman periods. However, the addition of musical contests for boys is a new type of activity at the site, where during the earlier periods our sources focus on other activities.

### 2.5.4. Military cult?

As already mentioned briefly above, for Flower the depiction of the armed goddess on a third century coin is the cult image of Orthia, and this in turn suggests the goddess' martial nature. He also points out that the cult image of Orthia in Messene was not depicted armed, therefore meaning that it is the militaristic Spartan context that has the goddess take on a military role.[274] The identification of the figure on the coin is far from clear, and it has also been suggested to depict Apollo at Amyklai, another important Spartan cult, which will be discussed in chapter 4. Flower also mentions women in connection with the sanctuary, or at least the goddess: Alcman's *Partheneion* was possibly performed in a ceremony connected with Orthia (although, as seen above, this connection is doubtful). This poem praises the beauty of the chorus leader and her assistant as they take some sacred object to the sanctuary.[275] Thus, for Flower the site is a location for a warlike goddess who is connected with the initiation of Spartan boys and girls.

Another scholar to describe the cult as (somewhat) warlike is Calame, who sees the cult as civic in character. The whipping of boys going through the *agoge* involves the cult in the preparation of youths for citizenship, thus making the sanctuary one of the centres for civic life in the polis.[276] He also notes that "the cult honouring Artemis is a sign that religion

[270] Ducat 2006; Kennel 1995, 126; Hodkinson 1999, 178, n 4.
[271] Ducat 2006, 211.
[272] Woodward 1929a, 288.
[273] See above section 2.2.
[274] Flower 2018, 433.
[275] Flower 2018, 442.
[276] Calame 2001, 158-159.

took upon itself in ancient Sparta, as in most societies with a tribal structure, the political and military education of the future citizen".[277] However, we have already seen in the introduction that parallels between the 'tribal' nature of Spartan society and comparisons with supposed warrior tribes are misleading.

[277] Calame 2001, 159.

### 2.6. Orthia: Material evidence

In this section I will focus on the dedications found at the sanctuary during the early 20th century excavations. They will be arranged chronologically where possible, in different categories of finds, to allow for a discussion at the end where the finds will be considered in a wider historical context for Sparta.

#### 2.6.1. The pottery

The pottery found during the excavations is relevant to the current study in two ways. Firstly, it gives us evidence of drinking and dining activities taking place at sanctuaries. This is common in Greek religion, and pottery is a very frequent find category on any excavation. In some cases, the pottery can give evidence of particular rituals taking place at sanctuaries: the small *krateriskoi* found at Brauron depict running girls, and we know from literary sources that in that sanctuary girls would perform a ritual of 'playing the bear', which is thought to be reflected in the iconography of the *krateriskoi*.[278] In the case of the pottery found at the sanctuary of Orthia, there is no iconographical motif that could be identified with a ritual other than drinking and dining. Some of the pottery have graffiti inscriptions, which show that they were dedicated to the goddess.[279] This could have happened after a ritual of drinking or dining, or the pottery could have been brought to the sanctuary as dedications without use in the sanctuary beforehand.

Secondly, the pottery helps create a relative chronology for the sanctuary, and thus helps us date some of the objects. The Laconian pottery found at the site provided the excavators with relative dating but fixing absolute dates on the different types had to be altered afterwards, changing some of the absolute dates for the different architectural phases of the sanctuary. This was a result of unreliable interpretation of the material, such as measuring and comparing depths of deposits to determine the lengths of periods.[280] Nevertheless, the relative sequence of the pottery is useful as long as the absolute dates given in the first publication are adjusted, and it is often the only contextual information

[278] The ritual is in turn related to an *aition* where a bear sacred to Artemis was killed, and to placate the goddess the girls would participate in this ritual. The *krateriskoi*: Kahil 1963 and 1965. For the ritual, see Dowden 1989, 25-32.
[279] The inscriptions are mostly very fragmentary, but sometimes we have preserved the name of the recipient (Orthia), or the dedicator (see Droop 1929a, 111).
[280] Dawkins 1929b, 18; Droop 1929a, 63.

available.[281] There has been some discussion about the reliability of this relative sequence and the stratigraphy at the site. I will come back to this when I discuss the lead figurines, but now I will give an overview of the types of pottery based on the original publciation, and the absolute dates for them.

The pottery found at the site was divided into groups of Geometric and Laconian I-VI.[282] The beginning of Laconian I overlaps with the last Geometric style (subgeometric), and seems to have started with smaller vessels, while the subgeometric styles were still reserved for the larger ones.[283] In Laconian I the shapes include cups, plates, *lakainai* (a drinking cup), and *skyphoi*. Droop notes that during the Geometric period, a pyxis was common, but this shape vanishes with the Laconian I style.[284] Laconian II was short-lived at the sanctuary of Orthia, and ends around the time of the flooding and the sand layer.[285] The few pieces that were found belonging to this group include *lakainai*, *kylikes*, cups, and *deinos*, and during this period we begin to get dedicatory inscriptions on the fragments.[286] One *kylix* of the following style was found under the sand layer, which would indicate that the Laconian III dates just before the sand layer (approximately 570 B.C.), although Droop considers this one piece as having been misplaced.[287] Among the Laconian III are plates, *lakainai*, *oinochoai*, *kylikes*, *pithoi*, which testify to the continuing drinking and dining activities at the sanctuary, but also that some ingredients were being stored at the sanctuary in the *pithoi*.[288] During Laconian IV, Droop notes, the quality of the slip and patterns decline, but that the shapes remain the same as before.[289] During Laconian V the quality remains low, and shapes include *lakainai*, *oinochoai*, *kylikes*.[290] The final Laconian style, VI, Droop only described in

[281] Boardman 1963. For Laconian pottery in general, see Stibbe 1972, 1989, 1994, 2000, 2004. For his commentary on chronology: Stibbe 1972, 8-9. For the 'Dark age pottery', see Coulson 1985.
[282] Droop 1929a, 112-113.
[283] Droop 1929a, 66. Boardman dated subgeometric here to mid-seventh century B.C. (Boardman 1963, 3).
[284] Droop 1929a, 70.
[285] Droop 1929a, 72; Dawkins 1929b, 16-17.
[286] Droop 1929a, 72-80.
[287] Droop 1929a, 85, 88.
[288] Droop 1929a, 80-94. Droop notes that "one or two" moulded *pithoi* were found in the sanctuary (p 88).
[289] Droop 1929a, 94.
[290] Droop 1929a, 94-101.

terms of the patterns, but we can see some small cup handles on fig. 80, and *lakainai* on fig 83.[291]

Table 1 shows the absolute dates given by Droop, along with those suggested by Boardman. I will use the dates of Boardman throughout here.

**Table 1**

| Category | Absolute dates by Droop 1929a[292] | Absolute dates by Boardman 1963 |
|---|---|---|
| Geometric | 900-700 | eighth century -650 |
| Laconian I | 700-635 | 650-620 |
| Laconian II | 635-600 | 620-580 |
| Laconian III | 600-550 | 580-550 |
| Laconian IV | 550-500 | |
| Laconian V | 500-425 | |
| Laconian VI | 425-250 | |
| Hellenistic | 250- | |

In addition to these styles, there were numerous (over 10,000) miniature vessels found at the sanctuary. The majority were dated from Laconian I and Droop noted a great decline in numbers during the sixth century B.C., thus giving a probable end date to Laconian IV.[293] Droop does not list the shapes, but Hammond studied them for her dissertation on Tegean miniature vessels. She noted that the vessels are not labelled according to the find spots, so it is difficult to arrange them chronologically. The shapes included: *lakainai*, *kantharoi*, *skyphoi*, kraters, mugs, *aryballoi*, bowls, *hydriai* and pedestal vessels.[294]

[291] Droop 1929a, 101-105, fig 80 on page 105, fig 83 on p 108.
[292] Droop 1929a, 112-113. The beginning of the Geometric period is given by Dawkins (Dawkins 1929b, 18).
[293] Droop 1929a, 106-109. The earliest were found with Geometric pottery (Droop 1929a, 68). No quantities for the 'regular' pottery was published, so it is not possible to say how the great number of miniatures compares to the 'regular' pottery. In addition, the pottery is mostly found in fragments, while miniatures are more likely to survive more or less complete, so it would be more difficult to gain comparable data.
[294] Hammond 1998, 188.

Miniature pottery is discovered widely in Greek sanctuaries, but their particular meaning remains elusive.[295] The shapes of the miniatures found at the sanctuary of Orthia correspond to the shapes found among the 'regular' pottery (apart from the *hydriai* and pedestal vessels), and it is possible they were used as substitutes for the real shapes, as symbols of the action of using the real shapes, or as dedications after drinking and dining rituals at the sanctuary. Hammond also suggests some of the miniatures could be used in a ritual, where the vessel would contain a small amount of some liquid or foodstuffs that could then serve as and offering, or be consumed in a "ritual" re-enactment.[296]

Some of the pottery had painted or incised dedications, specifying the name of the dedicator and/or the recipient, making them definite dedications. These emerge in the Laconian II style, with various spellings used for the recipient.[297] Interestingly, Artemis is not mentioned among them, the recipient is always named Orthia, with various spellings.[298] This is however consistent with the other evidence for the name of the goddess, as already discussed earlier.

Decoration on pottery in general cannot automatically be used as evidence for the concerns of the worshipper, because we cannot be certain if the pottery was made for dedication, or if it was dedicated after use elsewhere. In the publication of the pottery found at the sanctuary we can see that the figurative scenes mostly involve various animals and some scenes with men on horseback, as well as depictions of a gorgon.[299] While at the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron some pottery had scenes related to the rituals performed at the sanctuary, this does not seem to be the case here.

[295] Hammond 1998 focusing on Arcadian miniature pottery, and more recently Barfoed 2015, who focuses especially on the striking low quantities at Olympia.
[296] Hammond 1998, 214. She is discussing the Tegean miniatures in particular, but the suggestion is applicable here as well.
[297] Droop 1929a, 73, noting 'Forthasia' as the inscription on pottery, differing from other spellings on early inscriptions.
[298] Woodward 1929a, 371-374.
[299] Droop 1929a.

### 2.6.2. Masks

Another category of material found in great numbers at the sanctuary is terracotta masks, made of the same local clay as the local pottery found at the sanctuary, suggesting that they were probably made locally, and probably for use in the sanctuary.[300] I will first discuss the types of masks found during the excavations, as the types have been used to make suggestions for the use and meaning of the masks. These then have had with consequences for the identification of the cult's character, which I will discuss in the end.

Masks first appear in association with the latest of the Geometric pottery and Laconian I, and continue to be deposited until Laconian VI. During Laconian V, a new type of mask appears, the miniature, and they are the last types of masks to be dedicated during Laconian VI. These appear in the sanctuary before the sand layer, but the majority are found above it. Thus, the height of the popularity for the masks, and indeed other dedications as well, coincides with the period of building a new temple and Laconian III and IV.[301] Dickins notes that the majority of the masks were found in two deposits right above the sand layer, and that Laconian III would be the period, to which most of the masks could be assigned.[302] Many of the miniature masks (for which Dawkins gives no numbers) were found in the deposits close to the walls east of the altar. Many of these were depicted wearing a polos-like headgear, but apart from that, they are too simple to allow for any interpretation of what they depicted. Some have holes for the eyes.[303]

None of the masks unambiguously represent warriors or refer to war in other ways. Nevertheless, previous scholars have interpreted one category of masks as representing warriors – that of a youthful male (fig. 4). These interpretations are best discussed together with the other categories of masks.

Dickins divided the masks into seven categories (old women, youths, warriors, portraits, satyrs, gorgons, and caricatures) but the definitions and distinctions between them are not always clear and they have been subject to criticism (see below). The category of 'old women' has very few feminine traits and some even have beard and whiskers or incisions indicating a beard.[304] The interpretation of the type as ugly female first proposed

[300] Dickins 1929, 169.
[301] Dickins 1929, 163.
[302] Dickins 1929, 165.
[303] Dawkins 1929c, 153.
[304] Dickins 1929, 167.

by Bosanquet is based on two ancient sources: Pollux and Hesychios. The former describes dances of women in honour of Artemis and Apollo (4.104), the latter (s.v. βρυδαλίγα, βρυλλιχισταί) describes two words Bosanquet saw as referring to dance. Βρυδαλίγα refers to a female face, while βρυλλιχισταί to an ugly mask worn by someone in female clothing. Thus, for Bosanquet the ugly female masks were worn during dances to honour Orthia, who was a deity close to Artemis (and later became assimilated with her).[305] Later Dickins followed Bosanquet in his article.[306]

Carter was among the critics, and she saw the 'old women' as 'furrowed grotesques' since there really is no definite feminine trait in the masks, and because the interpretation of them is based on literary sources as mentioned above. Carter accepted the types of 'Gorgons' and 'satyrs', but added that they could also be seen as subcategories of the grotesques.[307] The bearded and clean-shaven men represented an ideal, which she chose to call a hero.[308] I agree with her in that there is no evidence on the masks themselves to suggest that they depicted men as warriors, as they were described in Dickins' categories. The only iconographic element suggesting this identification would have been a helmet, but there are not traces of such on the masks themselves. Therefore, I prefer to see these as depictions of 'men/youths' in general.

Carter did not accept the type of 'portraits' as actually depicting real men, and since realistic portraits only appear in Greek art centuries later than the masks, and since they are so infrequent, she prefers to see them as examples of her types 'furrowed grotesques' or 'heroes'. The two very fine examples of 'portraits' illustrated in the original publication are put in these two categories.[309]

Therefore, she had four (or two) types, and the distribution can be seen in the following table:[310]

[305] Bosanquet 1905/1906, 338-340.
[306] Dickins 1929, 165, 166-169.
[307] Carter 1987, 358.
[308] Carter 1987, 357.
[309] Carter 1987, 357-358. For the two examples, see Carter 1987, 358 footnote 9. These are pictured in Dickins 1929, pl. 55.1 (Carter's 'hero') and 55.2 (Carter's 'furrowed grotesque'. See also Dickins 1929, 167-168.
[310] Apart from the two abovementioned masks Carter describes as 'hero' and 'furrowed grotesque', the portraits are excluded from this chart.

**Table 2** (data collected from Carter 1987)

| **Type**: | **Number**: |
|---|---|
| Furrowed grotesques | 437 |
| Satyrs | 75 |
| Gorgons | 15 |
| Heroes | 272 |
| | Total: 799 |

We can see that the preponderance of the non-human masks is very significant (527 to 272).[311] Then what were the different types referring to? Vernant saw the masks as representing different groups of 'others', which the Spartan youth must explore in order to emerge as the citizen of the polis.[312] For him the most important groups of the masks are the adult warrior, "the ideal product of the *agoge*", the grotesque, with variations on the "model virile adult", and the old woman, symbolizing the greatest otherness in its distance from the youth in sex, age and status.[313] David follows the same line. To him the furrowed masks represent the elderly, worn by helots and ephebes impersonating helots. He sees the categories of masks from the point of view of age (geriatric and youthful) but these both rely on questionable criteria.[314] What can be seen in the types of the masks are two opposing styles: the very humanlike type, interpreted above variously as a hero, warrior, adult man or ideal youth, and the type representing a contrasting figure, an old woman/man, a non-human, grotesque, gorgon, or satyr. And as we could see in the table above, the latter well outnumber the former.

Are there any clues to the meaning and use of the masks among the other finds? Boss discusses one unpublished lead figurine from the Sparta Museum as wearing a grotesque mask, however, the poor quality of the illustration shows no clear signs of a mask

[311] This distribution is not quite as even as Carter described it: "... it should not surprise us that at Sparta the masks of bearded "Warriors" and un-bearded "Youths" occurred almost as frequently as the furrowed grotesques." (Carter 1987, 369). Carter's interpretation of the meaning of the masks connects them to the Phoenicians. I agree with Waugh's criticism of this (Waugh 2012, 6).
[312] Vernant 1991, 231.
[313] Vernant 1991, 226. For the Spartan *agoge*, see the main treatises Ducat 2006; Kennell 1995; and most recently Richer 2018.
[314] David 1991, 71-72.

on the figurine.[315] There are small terracotta figurines found at the sanctuary of Apollo Hylates in Kourion on Crete, which depict standing figurines holding masks on their faces. For Falb these represent dancing figurines (although the bottom half of the body is crudely made and pillar-shaped) and she suggests the masks found at the sanctuary of Orthia may have been used in similar masked dances.[316] While it is difficult to agree with the dancing aspect of her suggestion, these figurines act as a good suggestion for the use of the masks. The figurines hold the masks on their faces, and therefore further show that the use of the mask is not tied to the exact fit of the mask over a face. In ritual action, they could be held up, and then the presence (or the lack) of holes for eyes, or the fit in general is not a problem.

It is unfortunate that the find contexts do not allow us to study the changes in popularity for the types. That the majority of masks were found in two deposits is helpful in only giving a *terminus post quem*, after the layer of sand and coinciding with Laconian III and after. Laconian III and IV were the periods when we see a significant increase in the number of the lead figurines and the building of the new temple, so it was a period of high activity at the sanctuary.

While not all masks were of a size suitable for wearing (such as the miniatures), it is clear that they demonstrate the 'other' and the 'human' in their contrasting iconography. It is possible that they were used in rituals connected with these opposing roles. Parker speculates by connecting Spartan ephebes to the clay masks, and notes that their contrasting features (the types of wrinkled old woman and the 'hoplite', the youth) allowed for rituals of reversal, where as part of getting "inoculated against the 'ridiculous and base' the ephebes would wear the masks.[317] Highlighting the masks, Parker further advances his interpretation of the site as a place of initiation for the young Spartiate men, and the skills they need as future warriors. However, the connection of these masks to military sphere is tenuous at best, as it can be postulated only as a social role associated with the male gender represented by 'youth/man'-variety of masks.

Since the majority of the masks were found during the period of reorganisation and change at the sanctuary, we can again observe a change taking place. While it is not possible

[315] Boss 2000, 73, abb. 61, No. 565; 207.
[316] Kaaskard Falb 2009, 141, illustrated on p. 143.
[317] Parker 1989, 152.

to say if rituals related to these opposites were performed more often, or if there were a larger number of participants, the larger number implies their increased importance in either case during this period. None of the masks have inscriptions identifying them as dedications for the goddess, but it is plausible that they could have been dedicated after use in a ritual described above. When it comes to the miniatures, they can more probably be seen as dedications, as their use as masks seems more unlikely. In that case, dedicating the miniature masks may have marked a part of a ritual, where a reference to the action of the masks was sufficient. All in all, masks suggest a certain performative ritual, but its exact meaning is unclear, although most scholars agree that the participants were youths.

### 2.6.3. Lead figurines

The most numerous dedications at the sanctuary were those of lead figurines ranging from the late eighth century B.C. to the end of the third century B.C., with a total of nearly 100 000 figurines. Many of these lead figurines are military-themed, showing both males and females carrying arms, while some round lead disks probably depicted miniature shields. Therefore, we can see that in this find category warfare is an important theme.

The stratification and stylistic analysis led Wace to divide the leads into 7 groups, Lead 0-Lead VI, shown in the table below.[318] There is a clear peak in popularity in the sixth century B.C., but figurines are found from the earliest period of use at the sanctuary to the Hellenistic period.

While the relative chronology for the pottery has been in general accepted, for the lead figurines the matter is much more complicated. Wace's categories are a result of combining quantities of finds, typology, stratigraphy, and associated pottery.[319] In addition, the absolute dates and the categories have received criticism. Cavanagh and Laxton, who studied the lead figurines from the Menelaion (excluding wreaths), examined finds from two trenches consisting of 5 contexts, but struggled to find a way to meaningfully categorize the types, so that a figurine from an unknown context could be assigned a date.[320] To illustrate this, they showed that a type of warrior figurine from their Lead 3/4 –group (dated

[318] Wace 1929, 249-252. Based on numbers given in Wace 1929, 249-250. The dates in paranthesis are those from the original publication by Wace, otherwise I am using dates based on the new dates proposed in Boardman 1963.
[319] Wace 1929, 250-251.
[320] Cavanagh & Laxton 1984, 23-36.

by them after 560 B.C.) was identified as Lead I and II (dated to 650-580 B.C.) at the sanctuary of Orthia. The authors speculated that the stratigraphy at the Orthia sanctuary might have been unreliable, as had already been suggested by Boardman.[321] Gill and Vickers conducted a lead isotope analysis on a sample of 12 figurines from Laconian I to Laconian V-VI groups from the Menelaion, and the evidence suggested that the material for 10 or 11 of the total was made from lead coming from the Laurian mines in Attica, and possibly even from the same piece of lead. This would support the criticism of Wace's relative chronology, which cannot explain the lack of stylistic change through time.[322] However, melting and remaking of metal objects, which is known to have happened in Greek sanctuaries, could also explain that similar compositions are found in different categories.[323]

Another recent study on lead figurines concluded that the range of the material should be dated typologically to around 650-500 B.C.[324] Boss (2000) divided the material into 63 "themes" of representations and tried to understand the underlying religious ideas. His study does not help much with the relative chronology of the sanctuary, because the new chronological range for the typology does not signify the time when the figurines were dedicated. However, his chronological range for the production of the figurines indicates that the they were still being dedicated centuries after their production and thus remained relevant to the worshippers. The only issue here would be if the associated pottery, which lead to the lead categories, would be mixed due to later processes leading to mixed periods of pottery in each layer. This has been suggested for the sanctuary of Orthia, and this causes some uncertainty for the conclusions that can be drawn from the publication by Wace.[325]

How are we then to analyse the finds? Wace's publication does not need to be dismissed altogether, since his categories mainly correspond to the relative sequence of the

[321] Cavanagh & Laxton 1984, 33; Boardman 1963. The former also suggest that the sand layer should be dated to 600/590 B.C., based on a new fragment of a commentary on Alcman (Cavanagh & Laxton 1984, 34-35). This is, however, more unreliable than dating with the aid of pottery.
[322] Gill & Vickers 2001, 233, 235.
[323] For melting and remaking objects in sanctuaries: Linders 1989-1990.
[324] Boss 2000, 3; 154-174.
[325] See discussion on the material on Fragkopoulou 2010, appendix 1, who analysed some of the excavation notebooks. Unfortunately, the data in the notebooks was also limited, and the levels for each layer and the associated lead figurines do not give enough information to revise Wace's categories. Fragkopoulou is also critical of Boardman's revised dates (Fragkopoulou 2010, 240). As I have already mentioned, another, still unpublished, study has been done on the location of the trenches, so there is hope that some of these issues can be solved in the near future. Luongo 2015 had an overview of this ongoing work, which I hope will be fully published soon.

accompanying pottery that was recorded, and while there may be issues with it, this forms a basic structure we can attempt to analyse. We can draw some conclusions on the different themes in use during different periods of time, keeping in mind that the particular dates may be subject to change. I will return to discuss the difference between the balance in quantities between different figurines in the end, with the information from Fragkopoulou's dissertation, which analysed some of the excavation notebooks.[326]

My overall argument does not rely on these finds alone, so even if the data was unreliable, this would not invalidate the results, which rely on a very wide range of archaeological and literary evidence. The total quantity of the figurines in each category is somewhat unreliable but this does not affect the overall argument. Table 3 below lists the information from Wace's chapter in the original site publication: 'all leads' is the total number of figurines; 'types' refers to the different motifs (wreaths, women, animals, warriors etc.); 'anthropomorphic' includes types such as warrior, gods and goddesses; 'varieties' includes different warrior figurines (e.g. with different shield devices).

[326] Fragkopoulou 2010.

**Table 3**[327]

| Category | No of all leads | No of types | No of anthropomorphic types | No of varieties of warriors | No of varieties of a goddess as warrior | Dates by Boardman 1963 (Wace 1929) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lead O | 23 | 5/16 ? | 4 | 1? | - | Before 650 B.C. (late eighth century B.C.) |
| Lead I | 5719 | 44 | 10 | 16 | - | 650-620 B.C. (700-635 B.C.) |
| Lead II | 9548 | 53 | 16 | 18 | 1 | 620-580 B.C. (635-600 B.C.) |
| Lead III-IV | 68822 | 41 | 19 | 26 | 2 | 580-500 B.C. (600-500 B.C.) |
| Lead V | 10617 | 19 | 12 | 10 | 2 | 500-425 B.C. (500-425 B.C.) |
| Lead VI | 4773 | 10 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 425- ca. 250 B.C. (425- ca. 250 B.C.) |
| | Total: 99502 | | | | | |

The Lead II types were found with Laconian II pottery and below the sand level (dating to the change from Laconian II to III, that is, ca. 580, according to Boardman), while Lead III and

[327] I have collected the numbers used in this table from Wace 1929. In the type of 'goddess as warrior' I have excluded the men and women (goddesses) carrying a bow but no other arms or armour, because they might be representing a hunter. The total quantity of lead figurines comes from Wace 1929, 252.

IV were above the sand. These two categories of Lead III and IV could not be separated from one another because they were found with both Laconian III and IV pottery.[328]

While we are fortunate to have the total quantities of lead dedications for each category, the publication did not give quantities for each type in each category. What we know of each category, e.g. Lead II, is that it had different types of dedications (e.g. the type of a male warrior), and different varieties of each type (e.g. the shields they carry have different decorations).[329] What we do not know is how many individual figurines we have for each variety, so we cannot say how many warrior figurines we have in total, nor how many we have of each variety. However, despite these limited data about the figurines, we can make some observations on the range of subjects depicted among the leads and when they appear or disappear in the series. This will add to our knowledge of all dedications found at the sanctuary in general. We also have the information about how many different varieties there were of different types of leads. It is not easy to draw conclusions about this. Perhaps dedicating different varieties had some, to us unknown, symbolic meaning, thus creating demand for them. But it is more likely that a craftsman would produce a greater variety of types if there was *in general* a greater interest in dedicating the type. E.g. there would be no reason to produce many different varieties of warriors if the worshippers were not that interested in dedicating warriors as a particular type. Therefore, an increased number of varieties in one period suggests that there is an increased total number in that type (e.g. more varieties of warriors suggests more warriors in total).

Let us now discuss in more detail different types of leads found at the sanctuary and see what kinds of themes emerge from them. As we can see from the table, the type representing a warrior (fig. 5) can be found throughout the series, if we accept the early date for the warriors of the Lead O-period.[330] Female figures with arms and armour identified as goddesses appear in the Lead II group and continue to the end of the series. The types include women with a spear (Lead V, VI), with spear and *aegis* (III-IV,VI), spear and

[328] 1271 figurines were found in a trial trench, of which most belonged to the Lead I and II categories. These are excluded from the table (Wace 1929, 251).
[329] Contrary to Wace, I chose to count male and female musicians as one type.
[330] These warriors belong to a category, which Wace sees stylistically and concerning the fabric as belonging to a separate and earlier category. However, these were found together with dedications of the following two categories, so no certainty can be made on the date (Wace 1929, 254).

shield (II,) with spear, shield and *aegis* (III-IV, V) (fig. 7).[331] The peak period for most varieties in the male warrior -type is Lead III-IV, and Wace comments "they occur in great numbers at this date, and the smaller types, which are roughly made, are the most popular".[332] The type continues to be popular during the subsequent period of Lead V. The biggest difference in the varieties of warriors was in the shield devices, which depicted not only more abstract decorations, such as spirals, rosettes, or a simple raised rim, but also representations of scorpions, roosters, and gorgons.[333] The publication only illustrated a sample of each category, not total numbers, and thus it has not been possible to see if the shield decorations change in popularity through time.

I have already discussed the issues with the typology and chronology of the leads above. But what we can see from the data from Wace's publication is that both the varieties of warriors and goddesses as warriors increase in quantities in the period after the sand layer (Lead III-IV, after ca 580 B.C.). This suggests an increased interest in dedicating military-themed items during this period. At the same time, we can also observe a marked increase in the total quantity of leads in this category. This period of a little over a century (620-500 B.C.) therefore saw a very large quantity of lead dedications offered at the sanctuary, while simultaneously the male and female warrior-types reached the peak number of varieties. It is difficult to assess the relative importance of the warrior-types during this peak, when we do not have the total quantities of warrior figurines available. I mentioned in the beginning the issues with the chronology of the different categories, and the potential unreliability of this data taken from Wace's publication, so it is worth comparing this with the excavation notebooks Fragkopoulou discussed in her dissertation.[334] The different tables in her Appendix 1 show the top and bottom levels for different sections of the excavation, with the quantities of lead figurines arranged according to type. Not all sections had all different types of lead figurines, and the total quantities vary from just a handful to thousands. The warrior type dominates in relative quantities only in section 78, while in the other tables we can observe a wide range of types, as we can see already in Table 3 above, with data taken from Wace's publication.[335] Even when analysing

[331] Wace 1929, 268, 274, 278, 279.
[332] Wace 1929, 274.
[333] Warriors can be found on plates CLXXXIII, CXCI, CXCVI-CC (Dawkins 1929a).
[334] Fragkopoulou 2010, appendix 1.
[335] Fragkopoulou 2010, 258.

the excavation notebooks in detail, Fragkopoulou was unable to solve the particular date range for section 78, and suggested 560 B.C. as an approximate date. This corresponds to the period of Lead III/IV in Table 3 above, a category that also displayed the highest number of varieties of warrior figurines, suggesting that while there are probably issues with the data published by Wace, this period of time around the reorganisation of the sanctuary following the flooding saw an increase in the warrior type. Future research on the stratigraphy and excavation method on this sanctuary will be needed.

Lead figurines also refer to other activities and groups of visitors at the sanctuary, such as women and musicians, and they depict a range of divinities and animals. I will move on to these other types of objects next.

Foxhall and Stears identified some of the dedications from the sanctuary as model textiles and accessories used in weaving.[336] These types were originally labelled as 'grids' or 'grilles' (fig. 6).[337] The objects are often rectangular in shape and bearing geometric patterns. Foxhall and Stears correctly draw a parallel with another sanctuary, the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron, where the inventory lists give numerous and elaborate descriptions of dedicated garments.[338] Inventory lists have also been found on Aegina, where pins and *peploi* are listed in various parts of the sanctuary of *Mnia* and *Auzesia* (*IG* IV2 787), and Herodotus writes that dress pins were required dedications to *Damia* and *Auxesia* (Hdt. 5.80-82).[339] In addition, textile dedications are attested at a range of other cult locations of mostly female deities, probably suggesting that these items were not only about women dying in childbirth but referring to a broader range of life-cycle events in women's lives.[340]

Foxhall and Stears argue that the dedication of clothing to Artemis highlights the goddess' role as overseeing life stages and their thresholds, as well as the role of women orchestrating these life stages for their families and communities.[341] Women produced textiles in the household and had more or less private ownership of what they had

[336] Foxhall & Stears 2000, 7-9.
[337] Ranging from Lead 0 until V (Wace 1929).
[338] Foxhall & Stears 2000.
[339] See discussion in Polinskaya 2013, 271-272; 280-281; appendix 4.
[340] The role of textiles in Greek religion has recently been studied by Brøns 2016, who lists a wide range of cult locations associated with textiles.
[341] Foxhall & Stears 2000, 3-4.

produced, and thus the connection between textiles and women is fairly strong.[342] In addition, the inventories from Brauron, which list dedications of clothing, also give the names of the dedicators, and they are all female.[343] Clothing played a role in different life stages (dressing of the bride, display of the trousseau, display and dressing of the deceased) and could express differences in age, gender, life stage, wealth and status.[344] While no inventory lists have been found for the sanctuary of Orthia, it is possible that real textiles were also dedicated to the goddess without being preserved in the archaeological record. But the lead models of textiles give evidence that women were among the worshippers here, and they probably considered Orthia as an overseer of life stages for women. For Richer, these lead dedications, together with the literary sources for the whipping rituals for boys discussed above, show that the cult of Orthia was mainly focused on initiation into adulthood.[345] But there are other themes emerging from the leads beyond warfare and female concerns.

Another prominent theme is music and dancing. Among the anthropomorphic figurines we have several types of musicians (ranging in date from Lead I to III-IV, both male and female), and lyres are found among Lead I.[346] These could perhaps be dedications made by musicians as we also have dedicated *auloi* found at the sanctuary (see section 2.6.4), or alternatively, depictions of Apollo as a 'visiting god' (see below for other divinities depicted in lead).

Smith identified *komast* figures among Wace's dancers, the main characteristic being the gesture of slapping themselves on their buttocks.[347] They appear from Lead I[348] to Lead III-IV.[349] These Spartan lead figurines are the only *komast* figurines found in a religious or dedicatory context in the Greek world, but Smith is reluctant to assign them any special

[342] Foxhall & Stears 2000, 11-12. The fifth century B.C. law code of Gortyn specifies that divorcing women were entitled to take with them half of the textiles they had produced in their husbands' homes, in addition to the dowry (*IG* IV 72 col 2, 48-52, col. 3, 17-24).
[343] Foxhall & Stears 2000, 5. Brøns 2016, 53 also notes some male recipients, and dedicators, but these are very much in a minority.
[344] Foxhall & Stears 2000, 12.
[345] Richer 2012, for boys 22-24, for girls 151-152; 314-316. Foxhall and Stears 2000. I will discuss the leads depicting clothing dedications in more detail below.
[346] Wace 1929, 258.
[347] Smith 1998, 79.
[348] Dawkins 1929a, plate CLXXXIII, 25.
[349] Dawkins 1929a, plate CXCVII, 30(?), 31, 34.

cultic meaning. Rather, she sees them as part of an iconographic repertoire, which found its way into Sparta.[350] However, considered together with the figurines of musicians and lyres, it seems that these objects could rather be symbols of action performed at the sanctuary during the period when the lead figurines were dedicated. Bone flutes (discussed below) have also been found at the sanctuary. The reasons of dedication for these objects could also be related to the identity of the dedicator, a musician or a dancer, who dedicates the 'tools of the trade', or symbols related to it.

It is interesting that musicians and dancers no longer appear in Lead V and VI. As discussed in the beginning of this chapter, literary evidence for games and musical performances shows that musical contests were introduced at the sanctuary in the Roman period. This does not have to mean that the performance of music stopped for a period of time between these two types of evidence. There is a drastic decline in different lead types during the fifth and fourth centuries in general, and lead figurines were no longer dedicated by the time we start getting literary evidence for musical contests.

Among the leads were also discs, with concentric lines and decorations, sometimes perforated in the centre of a similar size as the shields held by the lead warriors, Ø ca 4-7cm. Some of them are flat, while others are concave in the middle.[351] The flat ones resemble simple shields carried by some of the warrior type figurines, but the function of the perforation is unclear. It could mean that these shields were attached to something (but most of the other lead dedications were not perforated), or that the perforation was made for another purpose. The concave, perforated examples provide a clue to the more probable interpretation of these discs as representations of cymbals, as suggested by Boss.[352] These instruments would be perforated with cords running through the holes keeping the two discs together. In bronze, full-size instruments have been found as dedications in Greek sanctuaries.[353]

[350] Smith 1998, 81.
[351] Illustrated on pl. CC, 24-28 in Dawkins 1929a.
[352] Boss 2000, 139-140.
[353] ThesCRA II, 353 with examples of inscribed cymbals as well as references to uninscribed pieces found in sanctuaries. Warriors carrying shields with concentric decorations illustrated in plates CLXXXIII, 8; CXCI 17; CXCVII, 13, 16; CXCVIII, 2; CC, 12 in Dawkins 1929a.

Animals, both real and mythical are also represented among the leads, with most different types from Lead I to III/IV.[354] While most had a long span of use, we can note that sphinxes, fish, and boar are limited to the periods before the sand, while deer are only present after the sand. This coincides with the emergence of the female figurine carrying a bow and it led Wace to conclude that the identification of Orthia with Artemis started in this period, during Lead III and IV.[355] While this identification cannot be confirmed, it seems that the imagery of a hunting goddess made its debut later in the use of the sanctuary, that is, not before the sixth century B.C. and may represent changing ideas about the goddess.

Other divinities and mythological figures are also present from Lead I onwards. These include a winged goddess sometimes flanked by animals (possibly representing Orthia, from Lead I to VI, depicting her as the mistress of animals), armed goddess (Lead II-VI), Pegasos, Nike, Poseidon, Herakles, sirens, satyrs, centaurs, and gorgons.[356] If figurines have something to do with the understanding of Orthia's nature or function, then it seems that the mistress of animals predates the armed goddess, and the latter does not appear before the last quarter of the seventh century. Boss also argues that one of the figurines, originally labelled as a female goddess carrying a spear, depicts Apollo at Amyklai.[357] The widest range of these divine figures is found before Lead V. These so-called 'visiting gods' have already been discussed in the introduction.[358] The armed goddesses could be Athenas, or representations of Orthia as a goddess of war, and it is notable that the type continues until the last period of lead figurines, testifying to the continued significance of the type and the military aspect of the goddess throughout the centuries.

In addition, there are jewellery and miniature versions of objects in lead. Among the jewellery there are pins, rings and pendants found in Lead 0-IV.[359] Wace did not give exact quantities of these items, so it is not possible to comment on their popularity through time.

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[354] Wace 1929, 253-279.
[355] Wace 1929, 283.
[356] Wace 1929.
[357] Boss 2000, 50, no. 145; Dawkins 1929a, CXCVIII, 20-21. It is not easy to see the "manly features" that Boss suggests for the figurine because the object is so small. However, the long *chiton* shows the legs underneath, which is not the case for the rest of the female figurines (who often have geometrically decorated clothing, hiding the features underneath). For Apollo at Amyklai, see chapter 3 below.
[358] Alroth 1989.
[359] Wace 1929, 255-257; 265; 270-271; 277.

There are also real versions of these personal items found at the sanctuary (discussed below), so it is possible that these were more affordable alternatives to them. However, production cost may not have been the only reason to dedicate these items. I have mentioned already how there was a general shift from 'raw offerings' to 'converted offerings' taking place. The dedication of these may have been a question of preference in the general society, or perhaps purchasing and dedicating a purpose-made dedicatory object carried a special meaning to the dedicator that would not be the case with a personal item.

Two varieties of a lead plaque depicting an amphora set in a rectangular frame are found among Lead III-IV, possibly referring to the Dioscuri, who were depicted in various aniconic ways in Sparta.[360] Herodotus is the oldest literary source describing some portable representations of the Dioscuri:

> "When the armies were about to join battle, the Corinthians, coming to the conclusion that they were acting wrongly, changed their minds and departed. Later Demaratus son of Ariston, the other king of Sparta, did likewise, despite the fact that he had come with Cleomenes from Lacedaemon in joint command of the army and had not till now been at variance with him. As a result of this dissension, a law was made at Sparta that when an army was dispatched, both kings would not be permitted to go with it. Until that time they had both gone together, but now one of the kings was released from service and *one of the sons of Tyndarus too could be left at home*. Before that time, *both of these also were asked to give aid and went with the army*. (τέως γὰρ ἀμφότεροι εἵποντο· παραλυομένου δὲ τούτων τοῦ ἑτέρου καταλείπεσθαι καὶ τῶν Τυνδαριδέων τὸν ἕτερον· πρὸ τοῦ γὰρ δὴ καὶ οὗτοι ἀμφότεροι ἐπίκλητοί σφι ἐόντες εἵποντο). So now at Eleusis, when the rest of the allies saw that the Lacedaemonian kings were not of one mind and that the Corinthians had left their host, they too went off." (Hdt. 5.75., transl. A. D. Godley, Loeb edition, my italics)

The passage here indicates that an older tradition existed where both the kings and the sons of Tyndareus, i.e. the Dioscuri, were taken to battle, but after this particular event one of

[360] Wace 1929, 271,

each would always stay behind. What "the Dioscuri" in Herodotus were has been the subject of debate. They seem to be something portable, and How and Wells suggest that they were cult images.[361] Alternatively, Cook suggested that they were sepulchral jars.[362] Plutarch mentions wooden aniconic representations of the Dioscuri and calls them *dokana* (*Mor*. 478a-b = *De Frat*. 1). The *dokana* are most probably depicted on reliefs found in and around Sparta; they show horizontal beams supported by vertical ones (such as No 588 at the Sparta Museum).[363] A sixth century B.C. votive relief in the Sparta Museum shows the twins facing each other with two amphorae between them, and other, later, depictions of the twins also show them with amphorae.[364] Thus the amphorae depicted in lead most likely refer to the twins, although in a much simpler way than on the larger stone reliefs and the terracotta plaque. But does the reference to the Dioscuri symbolise something more than just the two gods? Flower sees the *dokana* and the twins as "a summarizing symbol for Spartan conceptions of kingship",[365] as well as role models for young males with their skills in athletic, equestrian, and martial pursuits.[366] Parker saw the popularity of the worship of the Dioscuri as a consequence not of the association with the kingship, but in their excellence in men's pursuits as listed by Flower. In addition, he refers to the myth that they lived on Therapne (where the Menelaion is located) on alternate days, and that they were therefore easily available local divinities.[367] This convenience and their skills perhaps paid a role in the popularity, but Parker does not consider here the evidence from Herodotus, where the representations of the twins are strongly connected to the Spartan kings. The framed amphoras suggests that the Orthia sanctuary was related to wider ideas about Spartan society and its organization. Perhaps Orthia was invoked to protect the dual kingship, or to invoke models for young males.

Miniature double axes are also among the lead objects (as well as among other materials at the sanctuary).[368] By being objects potentially used to attack someone as

[361] How & Wells, vol 2, 41.
[362] Cook 1925, 436, n 8.
[363] Tod & Wace 1906, 193, fig 68.
[364] The twins with amphorae Nr 575 (p. 191 fig 65), and other examples described on pages 113-114, Tod & Wace 1906.
[365] Flower 2018, 433.
[366] Flower 2018, 440.
[367] Parker 2019, 147.
[368] Wace 1929, 254. They range from Lead 0 to III-IV.

discussed in the introduction, they could refer to warfare, but this is by no means certain. The most numerous type of all the leads was the 'wreath'; some were spiked, some had round balls attached. The quantities for them increased significantly in Lead III/IV, with Wace recording one deposit of 8600 wreaths and 3725 of all other types combined.[369] Wreaths played a role in festivals and celebrations, including those related to military victory.[370] At Amyklai, during the Hyakinthia, there were special restrictions on the use of wreaths on certain days (see below section 4.3.2), however, a wide range of usage for wreaths makes these lead wreaths quite general in character. We have no literary evidence describing the meaning of wreaths at the sanctuary of Orthia, but lead wreaths were clearly very popular dedications here.

Lastly, there are figurines showing two horseheads flanking a female figure from Lead I-IV.[371] Boss sees these as references to the goddess as Mistress of Horses, a subtype of the Mistress of Animals, making the goddess especially associated with horses.[372] This title 'Mistress of Horses' is found on a table from the Bronze Age site of Pylos, but its cultic meaning is somewhat unclear.[373] This association with horses appears to then end in the end of the sixth century, again not long after the restructuring of the sanctuary. We will see below that horses are dedicated in other materials at this sanctuary as well, and indeed at the other three sanctuaries. That the goddess was a 'Mistress of Horses' is a quite vague statement, and the horse may have held some other particular meaning to the worshippers here, although it is difficult to tease these out. We will see among the terracotta figurines that the horses dominate the animal figurines, and some had male and female riders on them. We will also see that these horse figurines are also mainly dedicated during the Archaic period in the four sanctuaries, with only very few exceptions.

[369] Wace 1929, 281.
[370] They were associated with the festival Gymnopaidiai and used to commemorate a military victory at Thyrea according to Sosibius in Athenaios (Ath. 15.678b); they were worn by those from the country taking part in the otherwise unknown festival of Promacheia (Ath. 15.674b, also quoting Sosibius); they were dedicated after exercise during a military campaign (Xen. *Hell*. 3.4.16-18 ; *Ages*. 1.25-27); Plutarch writes that the men wear garlands and sing before the sacrifice before battle (Plut. *Lyc*. 22.2-3); they are worn during post-victory rituals (Xen. *Hell*. 4.3.13-14; 4.3.21).
[371] Wace 1929, 266, fig 123.
[372] Boss 2000, 136.
[373] Burkert 1985, 44, who sees the range of titles "mistress of…" as indicating the special roles of female deities in Bronze Age religion.

Lead figurines constitute the most numerous categories of dedications, and in all periods the assemblage shows that military-themed dedications are made alongside and among other categories of figurines. Female concerns are represented in figurines related to clothing and weaving. Musicians, musical instruments and dancers are dedicated to the end of the fifth century B.C., and so they coincide with peak periods of military-themed varieties. Figurines of animals (fish, boar, and deer (from 600 B.C.)) and mythical creatures (sphinxes), whatever they may signify, do not point to warfare. The disappearance of the lead horse figurines with a female head coincides with a wider trend of diminishing dedication of horse figurines. The appearance of deer and hunter-goddess seem to point away from domestic sphere, and yet the evidence for female concerns tells otherwise.

To conclude, the lead figurines show that from early on the theme of warfare was represented at the sanctuary, at least in this particular category of dedications. The peak period for them coincides with the wider restructuring of the sanctuary after the sand layer in the early sixth century B.C. There seems to have been wider changes going on as well at the time: the introduction of deer and the disappearance of horses among the leads testify to changes in the issues the worshippers thought the goddess would be interested in. It seems that while the popularity of the military dedications peaked during this time, this did not prevent other changes from happening simultaneously in the worship of the goddess. This suggests that the military aspect was an integral part of the worship taking place at the sanctuary throughout the period of study here, and they were part of a bigger picture. While there were other changes going on in the sanctuary, as well as in the wider world the Spartan interactions, and in Sparta's role on the international arena, those issues had no impact on the military focus of this sanctuary: the latter was present throughout all periods of lead dedications. What did change was the appearance and disappearance of other aspects of divine power invoked at the sanctuary.

### 2.6.4. Ivories and bone

Let us then move on to the next category of finds, those made in ivory or bone. These objects have received less attention among scholars discussing Spartan religion than the other materials, such as the masks or the lead figurines. However, they include depictions of warriors and other themes, and they should therefore be taken into consideration when discussing the nature of the cult and the activities taking place at the sanctuary. I will first

discuss the chronology and the functions of the objects made out of ivory and bone. Then I will shortly discuss the subject of production and clientele, as this has been a particular focus in previous research on the ivories. After this, I will discuss the objects themselves and what they can tell us about the nature of the cult, and their relevance to the arguments relating to the military nature of Spartan religion and society.

***Chronology***

The earliest finds are from layers containing only Geometric pottery, but the material is most frequent in layers associated with Laconian I and II. Ivory, which was reserved for the finer examples, can be found until the building of the new temple in the second quarter of the sixth century B.C., after which it nearly disappears from the archaeological record. Dawkins, who published the finds, argues that this proves that the ivory came from Syria, where the surrender of Tyre to Nebuchadnezzar in 573 B.C. ended the ivory supply to Sparta (I will return to the supply of the raw material and contacts outside Greece shortly).[374] After the publication of the ivory and bone objects, the chronology of the objects has been subject to debate. Dawkins arranged the material in four groups: "plaques carved in relief", " figures of Orthia and figures seated on thrones", "objects of personal use and adornment" and "miscellaneous". The first one of these groups was then arranged according to 8 different styles, which did not follow a chronological order, while the others were presented in different sub-groups depending on the subject matter or the type of object. The dating for the objects came from the associated pottery.[375] Dawkins noted a change in the range of motifs as well: it diminishes and more of the same types are made as time goes by. The latest carved bone and ivory are found with Laconian V.[376]

Marangou attempted a narrower dating for Laconian ivories and bone based on stylistic parallels found elsewhere.[377] With one exception, plaque CXII 1 (with two horses) dated to the last quarter of the fifth century B.C., Marangou's dates all fall in the Archaic

[374] Dawkins 1929e, 203-204. Dawkins dates the end of the popularity of ivory to about 600 B.C., but here the date is adjusted according to Boardman (see above).
[375] Dawkins 1929e, 203-205.
[376] Dawkins 1929e, 204.
[377] Marangou 1969.

period.[378] Of course, the date of production of an object does not automatically mean the date of dedication, and this could explain why some archaic period ivories and bone are found associated with much later pottery.

The discussion of the dates for the ivories have also led scholars to discuss the origin of the ivory material, their carvers, and how these influence the motifs depicted on them. Kopanias proposed a scenario where craftsmen trained in an Oriental, or Orientalizing workshop practised their craft at the Idaean Cave around the third quarter of the eighth century B.C. Some apprentices from this workshop continued there until the first half of the following century, while some moved to Sparta and worked at the Orthia sanctuary at the end of the eighth or the beginning of the seventh century. The workshop here was active until at least the sixth century B.C.[379] Marangou gave a more varied image and suggested that several islands between the Greek mainland, Syria and Egypt could have helped the movement of ideas and styles.[380] Earlier, Barnett had suggested several routes from North Syria, Phoenicia and Anatolia to Greece: via the islands to Sparta and Athens, and via Phrygia and Lydia to Ionia and finally to Corinth.[381]

An influence from the Near East can be seen clearly among the motifs on some of the ivory carvings. For example, the stylized 'sacred tree' in plaque CXII 1 is clearly influenced by Near Eastern prototypes.[382] It is not possible to say how the Spartan worshipper would have interpreted this motif; it could have been a familiar detail from other media and recognized as a foreign motif just on its own without adding any local meaning to it. The male and female characters on each side of the tree are a pairing familiar from other ivory plaques and terracottas. On the other hand, Marangou suggested that the male-female pairing on each side of the tree would have depicted Artemis and Dionysos as nature god/goddess pairing.[383] Her interpretation is based on the interpretation that the goddess at the sanctuary was a nature/fertility goddess as was suggested by the excavators of the site, to which she then adds another nature/fertility god, Dionysos, as a suitable partner. However, we have already seen that Orthia's nature was much more varied than

[378] For the Classical period plaque: Marangou 1969, 174.
[379] Kopanias 2009, 130.
[380] Marangou 1969, 204.
[381] Barnett 1948, 24.
[382] Kopanias 2009, 124; Marangou 1969, 14. Both highlight parallels in ivory reliefs from Nimrud.
[383] Marangou 1969, 18.

that. I will come back to the topic of divine consorts later on, but if the plaques were carved on location, the craftsmen could have chosen to use motifs they had learned in the workshop and through the influence of other ivory carving elsewhere. The 'sacred tree' flanked by the pair is not found on any other group of material found at the sanctuary, so it seems less likely that it would have been commissioned with a specific local cultic meaning in mind.

***Functions***

Before looking at the different types and their development through time, a few words should be said about the different functions the carved ivories and bone had. The majority of the early ivory relief plaques were attached to safety pin -type fibulae, making them raw offerings.[384] However, when bone starts to dominate as material, the plaques no longer show signs of being attached to fibulae, i.e. the material changes to converted offerings.[385] Dawkins gives no explanation for the new use of the plaques, despite the fact that many of them were pierced at different points and were thus attached to something. The new plaques that were not pierced, could have been attached to other objects in ways that did not require piercing, but they could also have been dedicated as plaques as such and not as decorations of other objects.

If we could consider the ivories chronologically, we could see possible changes and preferences during the period of dedication of these objects. This proved to be somewhat problematic, however, because often there was not sufficient contextual information. For some examples the find contexts were not clearly indicated, so they are left out of the table below. When the piece was found with pottery from several periods, it is placed in the latest of them. CXIII was excluded from the table completely, due to uncertainty of the quantity and dates of the examples.[386] What has been left out of the table gives the latest date for the plaques.

[384] Fibulae: Dawkins 1929e, 204. The only example where the fibula itself has been preserved is shown on plate XCI 1a, b and described on p. 205.
[385] Dawkins 1929e, 215.
[386] Dawkins 1929e, 216-217. Dawkins is not clear on the plaques of CXIII either (Dawkins 1929e, 216). He lists 21 examples of bone birds, of which thirteen were found with Laconian III and IV, and "of the rest, some are as late as Laconian VI. Since these are excluded from the table, Laconian VI shows zero examples.

**Table 4: plaques carved in relief**

| Chronology | Number of examples | Number of examples with warriors | % of warriors among all examples |
|---|---|---|---|
| Geometric | 11 | 2 | 18% |
| Proto-Corinthian | 2 | 0 | 0% |
| Laconian I | 24 | 4 (6) * | 17% (25%) |
| Laconian II | 7 | 3 | 43% |
| Laconian III | 1 (2)** | 0 | 0% |
| Laconian IV | 3 (4)** | 0 | 0% |
| Laconian V | 5 (6)** | 0 | 0% |
| Laconian VI | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Total: | 53 (56) | 9 (11) | 17% (20%) |

* The number in brackets includes fragmentary reliefs, where it is impossible to determine if the man was holding a staff or a spear. These are CIII 2 and CVI 3, in Dawkins 1929e, 212-213.

** Dawkins is not clear on the plaques CXII 2-4 (Dawkins 1929e, 216). Five examples with the same motif were found. Two were found in the last period of the old temple (Laconian II), and the last with Laconian V. It is perhaps probable that the remaining two were found in Laconian III and IV, but since he does not clearly say this, they are included only in the number in brackets.

***Military themes on relief plaques***

CXIV 1, a-c are plaques, where the background has been carved away. There are three fragments, depicting warriors facing left.[387] CXIV 1 a shows a leg and the left half of a round shield. Behind the leg stands a bird. It is difficult to see from the illustration if the warrior is shown holding a spear in front of him, or if this is supposed to be the left edge of a plaque. Dawkins describes the style as having the object standing free on its own, which would mean that the warrior is holding a spear. However, the majority of warriors from the sanctuary made of different materials hold the spear diagonally. In fact, among the illustrated finds, only one relief in limestone shows a warrior with a spear held vertically

[387] Marangou 1969 did not discuss these ivories.

(LXIV, 14).[388] Nonetheless, the shield clearly identifies the man as a warrior. CXIV 1 b shows a helmet and a part of a shield, and CXIV 1 c preserves only a head wearing a helmet. Dawkins describes the seventh style in general ranging from Laconian III to Laconian VI (the latest being carved birds), but notes in the case of the warriors that they "go down as late as Laconian V".[389]

Among the bone beads found at the sanctuary is one that has a crude depiction of two warriors with shields and spears.[390] The bone seals had a few anthropomorphic figurines, including two warriors (one with a round shield, one with a round shield and a spear).[391]

***Non-military themes on relief plaques***

Among ivory reliefs that do not use the motif of warriors, there are numerous examples of a winged female often holding animals (birds, lions, and one example of a snake biting her wrist, and one with a horse behind her) indicating her as Mistress of Animals, already seen among the leads. These are among the early plaques, and the motif disappears after Laconian II. Marangou dated the earliest plaques to the early seventh century, the latest ones to the 670-630s.[392]

In addition, there are plaques where a winged male is depicted holding birds, which Dawkins dated no later than Laconian I, and Marangou suggested the final quarter of the seventh century.[393] Pairs and groups of men and women appear as well, often holding

[388] The finds in soft limestone were generally placed immediately before or after the sand, with some found in the sand layer itself. Thus, this more rigid depiction seems to be a peculiar example from some time around 570/560 B.C., and thus earlier than the ivories in question (Dawkins 1929d, 187, 189).
[389] Dawkins 1929e, 217.
[390] Pl. CXXXVII 7.
[391] Dawkins 1929c, 228-230.
[392] Dawkins 1929e, 205-208, 214. Geometric XCI 1-2, XCII 2, XCIII 1-2 (Marangou 1969, cat nos 1-2, 4, 6, 14). Laconian I: XCVIII 1-3 (Marangou 1969, cat nos 5, 7, 11). Laconian I-II:, CLX 2 and CVII 1 (not discussed by Marangou 1969).
[393] Dawkins 1929e, 213, 235. Laconian I: XCIX 1, XCIX 2 (?) (Marangou 1969, cat nos 12-13), unstratified, but probably Laconian I: CV (Marangou 1969, cat no 36), uncertain but probably not later than Laconian I: CLX 2.

wreaths, dated to 660-630s B.C.[394] In addition, there is the motif of a man and a woman between the 'sacred tree' mentioned above dated to around the 680s by Marangou.[395]

Among the more elaborate scenes, there is a large plaque depicting a ship either about to depart or arrive. A woman standing on the left is holding the hand of a man standing at the stern and touching his shoulder with her other hand. An inscription incised on the ship identifies the recipient as Orthia. The plaque was found right below the sand layer, dating it to ca 580 B.C. Marangou dated it stylistically to the third quarter of the seventh century, while Jeffrey dated the inscription to the late seventh century.[396] Also among the reliefs with narrative scenes is a man killing a centaur (CI), man being attacked by an eagle (C 1), a man slaying a snake while being attacked by two snakes (or slaying hydra as suggested by Dawkins, CIII 1), Theseus slaying Medusa (CVI 1), and a *prothesis* scene with a man and two women mourning behind the deceased (CII 2). Marangou dated these reliefs to the second half of the seventh century B.C. The significance of these motifs for the cult is unclear.[397] Perhaps they referred to myths involving other divinities, making these examples of Alroth's 'visiting gods'.

Since the quantities of examples are very low, it is perhaps best not to place too much emphasis on the percentages. But we can see that the warrior appeared in this category of finds already during the Geometric period, which corresponds to the appearance of the lead warriors in Lead 0. The motif can be seen continuing nearly throughout the pottery periods. The Proto-Corinthian pottery, which is placed between Geometric and Laconian I pottery periods (see Table 1 in section 2.6.1), overlaps in absolute dates with both styles, and the two plaques were found in contexts with both Proto-Corinthian and Geometric pottery.[398] So there was no real break with the warrior motif

[394] Dawkins 1929a, plates XCIV (Marangou 1969, cat no 9), XCV (Marangou 1969, cat no 19), XCVI 1 (Marangou 1969, cat no 8), XCVII 2 (Marangou 1969, cat no 10).
[395] Dawkins 1929a, plates XCII 1 (Marangou 1969 cat no 3).
[396] Dawkins 1929e, 215, pl CX, CXI (Marangou 1969, cat no 38); Jeffrey 1961, 188.
[397] Dawkins 1929e, 209-211, 213. Marangou 1969, cat nos 25, 26, 31, 34, 23.
[398] Droop's sequence of the Laconian pottery goes from Geometric, subgeometric to Laconian I-VI (Droop 1929a). Proto-Corinthian was found in connection with Geometric subgeometric, Laconian I and a few with Laconian II pottery. Droop gives more detail on the connection between Proto-Corinthian and Laconian pottery on p. 114. Dawkins does not mention subgeometric at all in connection with the ivories and bones. Amyx gave the following approximate dates for Proto-Corinthian pottery: 720-630 B.C. (Amyx 1988, 428). For the sanctuary in question, this overlaps with both Geometric and Laconian I (see above).

among the early plaques. The last example belongs to Laconian V. Among the leads, there were still relatively many varieties of warriors in the Lead VI, but among the ivory and bone plaques this motif was by then no longer preserved.

***Orthia and enthroned figurines***

In Dawkins' second group of ivories and bone, there are none that could be classified as warriors, and neither are there any other figurines carrying arms or armour. Here we have *xoanon*-like figures (which Dawkins identifies as "probably" depicting Orthia), *protomai* (again, Dawkins interprets them as "presumably" representing Orthia), small bone figures seated on thrones, and pairs seated on thrones. Because of the combination of relative and absolute dates given in the publication, it is not possible to give definite numbers for the *xoanon*-like figures.[399] What can be said is that the type seemed to have been slightly more popular during Laconian III-IV (19 out of 47 falling exclusively into these periods) than during Laconian I-II (14 out of 47 falling exclusively into these periods), the first examples appearing in a context with Geometric pottery and the last with Laconian V. Marangou dated these to the seventh century B.C., but noted that they may have also been examples of later work using more conservative style.[400]

The figurines representing a single seated figure belong to equally mixed contexts, but those that Dawkins was able to date, fall within Geometric to Laconian I (15 out of 21). Marangou discussed one of these, which she identified as a seal, and dated it to the 640s B.C.[401] The type representing a pair of seated figurines, of which only three were found, were stylistically and with the aid of pottery dated to Geometric to Laconian I by Dawkins, while Marangou dated them to the second half of the seventh century B.C.[402] Similarly, the 14 protomai fall within the same periods.[403]

[399] Dawkins 1929c, 218-219.
[400] Marangou 1969, 158. She discusses the *xoanon* and *protomai* figurines on p. 150-162.
[401] Dawkins 1929c, 220-221. Marangou 1969, cat no 81.
[402] Dawkins 1929c, 221-222. Marangou 1969, cat nos 85-87.
[403] Dawkins 1929c, 219-220.

***Personal items***

In Dawkins' third group, Objects of personal use and adornment, we have numerous combs,[404] *fibulae*,[405] pendants,[406] rings,[407] pins,[408] beads,[409] seals,[410] and flutes.[411]. The combs, beans, rings and *fibulae* are most likely 'raw offerings' originally meant for daily use before they were dedicated at the sanctuary. The combs are all dated from the seventh to the beginning of the sixth century B.C. by Marangou[412]

Among seals (at least 95 in total) decorations in the form of animals predominate, but in addition to the depiction of warriors mentioned above, there is also a depiction of a woman, and a gorgon.[413] Of the flutes, there were 13 fragments, all dating to Laconian I-II. Two were inscribed: one described the recipient as Orthia and the other had the name Axradatos.[414] These add to our evidence of music at the sanctuary, in addition to the lead figurines discussed above.

***Miscellaneous***

Finally, we have Dawkins' fourth group, Miscellaneous carvings in ivory and bone. There are no military dedications among this group.[415] Two types of finds deserve a more detailed note. First, Dawkins included 93 miniature double axes here. Some were drilled to take a handle. The dates ranged from Geometric to as late as Laconian IV, the same as the miniature lead axes.[416] The symbolism of these objects was discussed in the Introduction together with other miniature objects. It is not possible to say if these were dedicated as military dedications, as axes could have been dedicated as a tool or a symbol of something

[404] Dawkins 1929c, 222-224.
[405] Dawkins 1929c, 224-226.
[406] Dawkins 1929c, 226.
[407] Dawkins 1929c, 226.
[408] Dawkins 1929c, 226-227.
[409] Dawkins 1929c, 227-228.
[410] Dawkins 1929c, 228-230.
[411] Dawkins 1929c, 236-237.
[412] Marangou 1969, 101-111.
[413] Dawkins 1929c, 228-230.
[414] Dawkins 1929c, 236-237.
[415] Dawkins 1929c, 239-245.
[416] Dawkins 1929c, 239.

without a military connotation. The other objects belonging to the miscellaneous group included various game pieces (knuckle-bones and dice) and needles.[417]

An important category was not identified by Dawkins but has been recently discussed by Foxhall and Stears. These were bone pieces with geometric decorations, which Foxhall and Stears identified as tools used in textile manufacture.[418] They compare the material evidence from the Spartan sanctuary with the epigraphic evidence from Brauron, where according to one hypothesis, textiles were dedicated by women after successful childbirth or by their relatives if they died in childbirth, while still accepting the fact that the reasons behind individual acts of dedication would have varied. They also emphasize the strong connection between women and the production of textiles.[419] Thus the objects here should be seen as very gendered, and most probably dedicated by women. As to the aspects of the goddess they invoked it is impossible to be certain, but Foxhall and Stears suggest her role in maintaining the order of life and the successful transition between life stages.[420]

Lastly, there are the miscellaneous carved objects, which reveal little of their use outside being decorative dedications. The motifs have a wide range, and many are only represented by single objects (see Table 5). The animals represent already known types, but among the humans are a couple of interesting pieces: the flute player of unclear context, and the head flanked by horse's heads. The flute player adds to our evidence on music at the sanctuary and in the cult of Orthia, and the head flanked by horse's heads is a familiar type already familiar from the lead figurines. The individual horse heads could also be considered as referring to the same type and possessing similar meaning.

[417] Dawkins 1929c, 237-238, 239.
[418] Foxhall and Stears 2000, 10, fig 1.5.
[419] Dawkins 1929c, especially p. 11.
[420] Foxhall & Stears 2000.

**Table 5: miscellaneous carved objects**

| Period | Quantity | Animals | Anthropomorphic |
|---|---|---|---|
| Geometric | 11 | Scarab, animal head | 2 male |
| Geometric, PC, Laconian I | 23 | Horse head, sphinx, snake, bull, birds, couchant animal, unidentified animal | 1 man/monkey, nude boy, 1 man, eye, rider, human flanked by horses' heads |
| Laconian I | 12 | Feather?, griffin head, snake's head, horse's head | - |
| Laconian II | 3 | | Head, Gordon head |
| Laconian III-IV | 16 | Snake's head? | Woman, winged man |
| Laconian V | 4 | - | woman |
| Unclear | 14 | Sphinx, | 2 nudes, male head with helmet, head, flute-player |

***Analysis***

What can we then learn from the dedications in bone and ivory? The military aspect is mostly present among the earlier pieces, especially among the plaques, but it continues throughout to Laconian V. This corroborates the observation we made when studying leads: the aspect of warfare is present in dedications from the very earliest finds onwards. It is also clear that women are directly and indirectly present in the cult, as is indicated by the plaques, fibulae, pins, weaving tools, and figurines. Also, the figurines wearing a polos among the carved ivories may well have represented the goddess, because of the special status indicated by the headdress. It is significant that the earlier depictions of the goddess showed her as Mistress of Animals, but that this motif disappears after Laconian II, and from then on only *xoanon*-style depictions remain. Among the leads, the Mistress of Animals – type started to disappear after Lead III/IV. Also early were the depictions of enthroned seated pairs. The objects referring to warriors are more common during the earlier periods

down to Laconian II, after which only individual pieces continue the series down to Laconian V. This is in contrast to the lead figurines, where warrior figurines were present from Lead II onwards until Lead VI.

Carved ivory and bone items lend little support to a hypothesis of rituals postulated on the basis of masks (contrasting human and non-human figures): although these types are present (a couple pieces depicting gorgons), they are not significant in number that would be expected if this was a large and significant part of the nature of the goddess or of rituals connected to her worship. What is more informative are the enthroned seated pairs, and the plaques depicting two or three figurines holding wreaths. This motif is also found on one terracotta relief. It seems that there is some evidence from the earliest periods at the sanctuary for a male-female pair; perhaps this suggests a consort for the goddess, which was then later abandoned, explaining the lack of literary sources mentioning anything about it. If Orthia had had a divine consort in the Classical and later periods, it is unlikely that it would have been left out of the literary descriptions we have preserved.

### 2.6.5. Terracotta

Numerous types of terracotta objects were found at the sanctuary, ranging from the Geometric to the Roman periods, with a curious break during the Hellenistic period.[421] The terracotta objects represent various aspects, but it is striking that only one example shows a warrior (a fragment of a relief showing the head wearing a helmet, and a tip of the spear). This adds to the general evidence for the military aspect from the sanctuary, but the aspect was clearly not common among the terracottas. Instead, we find references to fertility/sexuality, as well as numerous animals. A brief survey of terracotta objects is necessary to add to the picture of the sanctuary's range of divine aspects.

#### *Terracotta reliefs*

Terracotta reliefs were dedicated during a long period, from Laconian I to V (652-425 B.C.), and among these we have the only one terracotta piece with a depiction of a warrior: a

[421] Dawkins 1929c, 145. I exclude vase decorations from the numbers presented by Dawkins. It is not possible to say if the vases were brought to the sanctuary as purpose-made or as 'raw offerings', and therefore what is depicted on them may not have any connection with the wishes the worshipper may have wanted to communicate with the recipient.

fragment showing a man holding a spear with a part of the helmet's plume preserved. This was found with Laconian V pottery (500-425 B.C.), and thus adds to the evidence of the military aspect for the Classical period.[422] The other motifs resemble those of the ivory plaques: female-male pair holding a wreath and each other's hands, sphinxes, horses, and some fragmentary pieces.[423] The female-male pair was already seen among the ivories, and here we have one more example to add. The relief was found in a mixed layer, but Dawkins assigned it to the Geometric period.[424] The ivory reliefs depicting similar scenes were dated to the seventh century B.C., and it is possible that this terracotta relief belongs to the same period. What these reliefs show is in part a military theme with the depiction of a warrior, but they also further suggest a divine consort to the goddess, as we have already seen from the ivories. It is notable that this pairing is not found during the later periods, so this may have been part of the goddess' earlier myth, which fell out of popularity or use after the seventh century. There are references to horses among the figurines, discussed below, as well as among the reliefs here.

***Figurines***

The terracotta figurines are much more numerous than the reliefs. The attempt here is to arrange the types chronologically in order to trace changes in dedicatory practice.[425]

Figurines from the earliest and shortest periods of use do not give much information about the nature of the goddess or the cult. From Geometric to Laconian I (eighth century to 620 B.C.), there are female figurines without any attributes, and (possibly) male seated figurines, as well as terracotta horse heads suggesting that the goddess was associated with horses.[426] We have already seen horses among the lead figurines discussed above, and on

[422] Dawkins 1929c, 154-155.
[423] Dawkins 1929c, 154-155.
[424] Dawkins 1929c, 154.
[425] Due to the problems of dating the material with the associated finds, they are here first arranged according to the earliest period of use and then according to the length of the period. Dawkins 1929c, 146 shows a chronological overview of the terracotta items, but the absolute dates used by him have been proven too early (Boardman 1963). I have attempted here to arrange the figurines according to the relative dates of the associated pottery, based on the information Dawkins 1929c recorded.
[426] Dawkins 1929c, 148-150. Dawkins identifies them as male because they do not seem to be wearing a dress.

terracotta reliefs. If the seated figurine is male, it could support the hypothesis of a male consort for the goddess. We already saw this among the ivories as an early and short-lived idea.

Three groups of figurines worth special attention are found from the early periods until around 500 B.C.

***Side-saddle female riders***

A group of 6 female side-saddle riders were found with Protocorinthian to Laconian III pottery (seventh century to 550 B.C.). The earliest pottery associated with these figurines is Protocorinthian mixed with Laconian I, and the type disappears after Laconian III.[427] The number of figurines on horseback is probably higher, because Dawkins observes traces of riders on several of the horses.[428] Side-saddle riders have been studied by Mary Voyatzis, who investigated the type from the Bronze age to the Archaic period, and noted that the side-saddle riders from the Peloponnese are found in sanctuaries of goddesses.[429] Who was the rider supposed to depict? What did the worshippers want to communicate with this type of a figurine? Voyatzis identifies the rider as a goddess, as women would rather have ridden a donkey than a horse in daily life, and because a horse as a highly respected animal would suggest a higher status for the rider.[430] Artemis was also the most popular recipient for side-saddle riders, and Voyatzis explains this with Artemis' role as a Mistress of Animals, which would attract dedications relating to animals.[431] More recently, Waugh discussed the imagery of a woman and horse at the sanctuary of Orthia, including not only the riders but also the figurines showing a woman between two horses found among the terracottas, leads, and ivories discussed above. She concluded that the Spartans might have wanted to

[427] Dawkins 1929c, 150.
[428] Some of these were probably female. These pieces fall mostly within the chronological range of the certain female riders, with one piece found in association with Laconian VI. In total Dawkins gives 30 uncertain female riders and 5 certain, but the numbers of the uncertain ones are probably lower because they included some which could have been male. Certain male riders are significantly fewer with 4 in total, with a chronological range from Geometric to Laconian IV (Dawkins 1929c, 150-151).
[429] She lists approximately 18 dedicated to Artemis, four to Hera, one to Athena Alea, one to Demeter, in addition to the five from the Menelaion (Voyatzis 1992, 274).
[430] Voyatzis 1992, 275.
[431] Voyatzis 1992, 275.

refer to an older (possibly Bronze Age as suggested by Voyatzis) tradition of dedicating female riders. In addition, she notes that the Spartan figurines are not made in the more expensive bronze, and therefore the Spartans adopted the motif from other regions. These were those that Sparta wished to control and thus the imagery expressed Sparta's political ambitions alongside the goddess' connection with the horse.[432] We will see later that side-saddle riders are also found at the Menelaion and Amyklai. Voyatzis explained this by the close geographical proximity, but we have already seen that there are other similarities as well between these two sites.[433] I will come back to the similarity of the material later on when I discuss the dedications found at the Menelaion, but it seems that both Orthia and Helen (presumably Helen rather than Menelaos) as local divinities were considered similar in nature within Sparta, and therefore attracted similar dedications when new types spread to this region from outside. And that is why both deer and side-saddle riders appear at these sanctuaries and not just at one of them.

***Females with animals***

The second chronological group of figurines shows a female with animals as well. For the period of Laconian I-IV (650-500 B.C.), there are 9 examples, made from the same mould, of a female wearing a polos with a lion in relief standing in front of her.[434] 9 examples of a female head flanked by two horse heads were also found from this period, a type discussed above.[435] These further add to the goddess' association with horses and her role as Mistress of Animals.

***Female nude figurines***

The third group consists of 9 nude female figurines, found during Geometric to Laconian IV (eighth century to 500 B.C.) (fig. 8). Two hold their right hand over their pubic area (one of them also holds the left hand on her breast) and these both belong to the Laconian I

[432] Waugh 2012, 15-16.
[433] Voyatzis 1992, 277.
[434] Dawkins 1929c, 149.
[435] Dawkins 1929c, 149.

period.[436] 13 nude male figurines were discovered during the same period.[437] In addition, one plaque from the sand layer showed two nude women standing on each side of a nude man. The women hold their right hands over their pubic area in the same manner as the figurines described above, and their left over their breast, while the man's genitals are exaggerated.[438]

Nude female figurines are not a rare find in sanctuary contexts, but their meaning or meanings are difficult to pin down. Merker, who published the finds from Corinth, considered some of them as having a connection with approaching adulthood and sexuality, or alternatively, death, as well as representing (or acting as substitutes for) nude *hetairai* possibly related to ritual prostitution and Aphrodite. A further hypothesis is that some are votaries bringing cakes to Demeter invoking her connection with agricultural abundance.[439] In Attica, nude figurines sometimes depicted on grave reliefs between the end of the fifth to the end of the fourth century B.C. have been convincingly interpreted as anatomical dedications relating to successful maturation.[440] Mitsopoulos-Leon, who discussed six nude female figurines in terracotta from the sanctuary of Artemis Hemera at Lousoi, associated the type generally with marriage, fertility, children and eroticism, but the figurines that originate from the sanctuary specifically, she interpreted as gifts of young women worshipping the goddess before getting married.[441]

The nudity itself and the gesture of covering the pubic area mark these figurines out contrast to the larger number of clothed figurines, possibly emphasizing the aspect of fertility and sexuality.[442] The gesture has its roots in the Near Eastern depictions of several female divinities, and can be seen as oriental influence making its way to Sparta, perhaps through the medium of votive terracotta plaques.[443] Nevertheless, the specific meaning(s)

[436] Dawkins 1929c, 152. Dawkins is hesitant about the number, writing that of one type of the same mould there were five or six examples. Here it is interpreted as five. All but one are made in the round, the one being a narrow, oblong plaque (pl XXXVI, 2).
[437] Dawkins 1929c, 152-153.
[438] Dawkins 1929c, 159-160.
[439] Merker 2000, 49-50; 171-172.
[440] Reilly 1997.
[441] Mitsopoulos-Leon 2012, 123-124; Mitsopoulos-Leon, 2001, taf 17, 3-4.
[442] Waugh 2009, 160.
[443] Salapata 2009, 329. See also Böhm 1990, who discusses the nude female -type with suggestions for the role of Crete as an intermediary between Greece and the Near east (chapter 6). She could not find a particular goddess to whom the nude figurines were meant for (p. 140).

of the figurines remain uncertain, although they seem suggestive of fertility/sexuality in their emphasis on the pubic area. Among the stone objects (see below), there is a piece with both male and female genitalia, which further suggests that fertility/sexuality was an important aspect of the goddess' worship here, and there are a number of ithyphallic figurines among the terracottas (see below).

***Other female figurines***

The remaining dedications were found during a longer period, often reaching Laconian V (500-425 B.C.), i.e. the beginning of the Classical period. We saw the female figurine wearing a *polos* already earlier, but a different type spans from Geometric to Laconian V (eighth century to 425 B.C.). In addition, there were female protomai, and draped female figurines, ranging from Geometric to Laconian VI (eighth century to 250 B.C.). [444]

***Female giving birth***

The figurines described above have all been either mould-made or having a mould-made head and a handmade body. In addition, there are numerous, quite crude handmade figurines as well: 293 human or humanlike figurines were found from Geometric to Laconian VI (eighth century to 250 B.C.), with the majority falling between Laconian I to IV (650 B.C.-500 B.C.).[445] Only one type can be identified as representing a female: it depicts a woman in a sitting posture with legs held apart and the genitals clearly marked.[446] The pose suggests giving birth, and they were suggested to have been dedications to Eileithyia.[447] As already described earlier, there is evidence that Eileithyia was worshipped nearby and so the terracotta figurines could therefore also have been meant for Eileithyia. Rose suggested that perhaps the two goddesses' functions overlapped, but perhaps instead Orthia was originally thought to provide aid with childbirth and only later on, when we have specific

[444] Dawkins 1929c, 148, 152.
[445] Dawkins 1929c, 155.
[446] Dawkins 1929c, 156. These were 11 in total.
[447] Hondius & Woodward 1919/1920-1920/1921, 102.

evidence for a cult of Eileithyia, did this aspect get moved to a specifically dedicated location nearby.[448]

***Ithyphallic males***

The types depicting men are for the most part ithyphallic, with one type holding his one hand over his head and the other on his genitals.[449] Rose interpreted these as referring to the goddess' interest in procreation, but Waugh suggests an apotropaic function - while at the same time acknowledging the difficulty of understanding this type of imagery.[450] Ithyphallic figures have also been found in Sparta at the sanctuary of Zeus Messapeus, located ca 4km north east from Sparta. In addition to the ithyphallic figurines, those of pregnant women were also found at this location, leading to the identification of this sanctuary as mainly concerned with human and animal fertility.[451]

***Other male figurines***

Among the other males are: a flute player, a type already known from the leads; a man carrying an animal, probably referring to animal sacrifice; a man kneading bread, which is a type known from many sanctuaries. Baumbach, who studied sanctuaries of Hera connected the type with household duties and Hera's role as tutelary goddess of marriage. But all the examples, where gender was visible, were female and not male as here.[452] Professional association with bakers and millers, as suggested by Gregarek for the type found at Kombothekra, seems less likely.[453] We have no other evidence for an association with baking or bakers at the sanctuary of Orthia, and given the very large amount of cheap lead

[448] Rose 1929, 402. A fragmentary handmade figurine was interpreted as being Eileithyiai with a woman, but there is little in the figurines to support this (Waugh 2009, 159-160; Dawkins 1929b, 51).
[449] Dawkins 1929c, 156-157. Dawkins did not give exact numbers for all of his types, but there seems to have been at least 156.
[450] Rose 1929, 204; Waugh 2009, 164.
[451] In addition, the finds included quadrupeds, weapons and athletic equipment, leading Catling to comment that it aligned with the more "conventional Spartan interests" (Catling 2002, 220). From the same site, see the inscribed cup in Catling and Shipley 1989, 187.
[452] Baumbach 2004, 34, 60, 91, 186-187. The sanctuaries in question were at Perachora, Tiryns, and Argos.
[453] Gregarek 1998, 82.

figurines, if the goddess was associated with this craft, we would have more examples of the type. Perhaps this example represents a votary preparing food about to be given to the goddess, in the similar way as the man carrying a sacrificial animal is referring to upcoming sacrifice.

***Animals***

Finally, there are the animal figurines. Dawkins notes that the horse was the most common and gives here the numbers of animals found:[454]

**Table 6**

| | |
|---|---|
| Horse | 59 |
| Cattle | 9 |
| Birds | 6 |
| Dogs | 7 |
| Goats | 4 |
| Rams | 3 |
| Couchant (probably sheep) | 5 |
| Tortoises | 3 |
| Lions | 1 |
| Uncertain | 8 |
| **Total** | **105** |

The chronological span goes from Geometric to Hellenistic, with the majority falling between Laconian I and II, and only 16 were found with Laconian III and IV and Hellenistic pottery. The animals are difficult to interpret in terms of beliefs in the divinity's powers and interests.[455] Here the preponderance of horses can be put in the context of the popularity of horse and depictions of the goddess with horses among dedications from this sanctuary (see sections 2.6.3. for leads and section 2.6.4. ivories). Clearly the horse has some specific, local symbolic meaning. We will also see below that horse figurines are also common dedications during the Archaic period at the Menelaion, Amyklaion and the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos, but the figurines found at the sanctuary of Orthia are much more numerous, as is the case with the other categories of finds. Some of the other animals found here may have represented sacrificial animals, as mementos of sacrifices, or as substitutes. Dedicating

[454] The numbers are based on the list given in Dawkins 1929c on p.157 and the list of fragments on p.158. There was one mythological figurine found among the terracottas, depicting a Minotaur. The figure had a squatting human body and a large bull's head. Dawkins 1929c, 158. Dawkins classified it among the cattle, but it is removed from the numbers in the table.

[455] See Bevan 1986 for association of dedicated animals and divinities.

a depiction of an animal may have been a more economic ritual than sacrificing a real animal, or a depiction of a sacrificial animal may have served as a symbol for wealth held in real life.[456] However, not all of the animals found here could realistically be thought of as sacrificial animals (such as the lion, and perhaps the birds), and their symbolic meaning for the cult remains unclear.

Finally, among figurines of inanimate objects, there is one miniature double axe, four dice, a small fragment depicting a roof of a building, and a small plasterer's smoother.[457] The motif of double axe has already been discussed above, and the fact that we see it also among the terracottas suggests that the type carried important symbolic meaning, although its specific meaning remains elusive.[458]

Terracotta objects thus indicate that during the earlier Archaic period the goddess was associated with horses and various animals. Animal dedications are found in large numbers in other sanctuaries, especially during early periods of use, such as at Olympia. In addition, there were several types showing nude male and female figurines, both among the mould-made and handmade, and there seemed to have been a connection with fertility, sexuality, and childbirth. Some of these could have been intended for Eileithyia, whose sanctuary was supposed to be nearby, but this was probably a later development. It is more likely that Orthia here oversaw the activities later associated with Eileithyia. The military aspect is not very prominent among the terracottas: and the only piece is from Laconian V. We can thus draw a contrast between types of figurative representations and make a preliminary observation that some motifs cut across the media, and others do not. We can see that horses are found among many types of materials, while female riders are unique to terracotta. Double axes, while only one piece was found in terracotta, are also frequently found. Reliefs in ivory and terracotta show male-female pairs, and while they are not found among the numerous lead figurines, this could be due to the nature of the material and manufacturing process: it could have been more difficult to make this type of a motif in lead. Or perhaps, judging by the early date for the pairs, by the time lead figurines were

[456] Morgan 1999, 335.
[457] Dawkins 1929c, 159. The plasterer's smoother was not illustrated and no other details were given of it.
[458] Dawkins 1929c, 158-159. Not all of these were given dates, but the double axe was found with Geometric pottery, the dice with Geometric to Laconian I.

produced in large numbers, the idea of a divine consort for Orthia was already being abandoned.

### 2.6.6. Carved limestone

Among carved limestone objects were both military and non-military motifs, including reliefs with depictions of warriors, numerous animals, and some miscellaneous objects.

First, a note on the contexts of these finds. Dawkins writes that the carved limestone objects were mainly found in contexts immediately before and after the sand, and should therefore be associated with the phases of Laconian II and III (620-550 B.C).[459] Several were found embedded in the sand itself, and Dawkins argues that the appearance of the material was related to the building of the new temple, and that while some may have been seriously intended as dedications, some were made for amusement by the sculptors.[460] None of them come across as suitable for architectural decoration due to their size. This would mean that after the flood, the old temple was taken down and the work on the new temple carvings commenced. Pieces of carved limestone were left in their places when the sand was laid and the construction of the temple began.

As already noted, military motifs are found among this material, along with various animals and other subjects.[461] For our purposes, it makes more sense to treat the types according to the subject of the carving, and thus the groups below include both finished and unfinished pieces. Here the material is divided into types of humans, animals, architectural, and miscellaneous. The human and animal groups have sub-types of warriors, horses, and lions. The division between the types is as follows:

[459] Dawkins 1929d, 187. For some, nos. 13, 16, 68, the date is more certain, as they were found below the row of bases on the north edge of the arena, and Laconian II and "corresponding types of lead figurines" were found with them.
[460] Dawkins 1929d, 187.
[461] Dawkins divided the material into 9 groups, Human figures in the round (no. 1-11), Human figures in relief (12-16), Horses in the round (17-22), Horses in relief (23-40), Lions in relief (41-47), Miscellaneous reliefs of animals (48-54), Plaques with incised designs (55-59), Architectural carvings (60-67), and Miscellaneous carvings (68-74) (Dawkins 1929d, 188-195).

**Table 7**

| Type | Number of examples |
|---|---|
| **Human** | **17** |
| Warrior | 4 |
| **Animal** | **41** |
| Horse | 24 |
| Lion | 7 |
| Other | 9 |
| **Architectural** | **8** |
| **Other** | **8+** |

Among the humans, warriors are a minority, and appear among the ones made in relief (nos. 13, 14, 16, and 55). All of these are fragmentary, and two (nos. 14 and 16) show only the legs with what are probably spears held by the figures. One, (no. 13) shows a man carrying a shield, and one (no. 55) has a helmeted head.[462] These contribute to the other examples of warrior motifs among the dedications. The other human figures are simple, and give little information about their identity. Only one is certainly female (no. 5), while one of the crude examples in the round show both male and female sexual organs alternating on the four sides.[463] This adds to our growing evidence of sexuality and fertility being important at the site. No. 58 is "a probably female figure ending in a fish's tail" and it is hard to know what to make of this example.[464] Perhaps this was one of the carvings made ad hoc during building works without any particular reference to the cult.

Among the animals, horses make up the majority, adding to the evidence discussed above, and confirming its significance at the sanctuary.[465]

The architectural carvings are as fragmentary as most of the others, and Dawkins sees them as small copies of buildings or sketch-models.[466] Schattner interpreted house models such as these as dedications connected with the welfare of households, while Catling sees them as dedicated in connection with construction or repair work done at the

[462] Dawkins 1929a, pl. LXIV, LXV. No. 55 is unillustrated, but it is described on p. 193 (Dawkins 1929d).
[463] Dawkins 1929d, 188-189.
[464] Dawkins 1929d, 193.
[465] Dawkins 1929d, 192-193. Other animals include 2 boars (nos. 48, 49), a dog (no. 50), a ram (no. 52), two sphinxes (nos. 53, 68), and a bird (no. 59). Of three it was difficult to identify the animal. No. 51 is a small animal, possibly a hare? No 54 is unfinished and very difficult to identify. Dawkins proposed a couchant lion. No. 58 mentioned above had a unfinished animal, possibly a bear.
[466] Dawkins 1929d, 194. An earlier fragment has also been found here in terracotta, dated to seventh to early sixth century B.C., Catling 1994, 271.

sanctuary. [467] The latter interpretation seems the most likely for the limestone pieces considering their find contexts during major building works at the sanctuary. In addition, there are two carvings, which represent ships, a wheel, and small fragments with dedicatory inscriptions (nos. 69-74).[468]

Since all the carvings belong to a very short period of time, the presence of warriors among the dedications can only be added to the evidence we have for this period in other materials. The motifs on the limestone pieces are known from other materials, and so besides the architectural pieces, the choice of what to carve seemed to have been inspired by other dedications already in the sanctuary, or, the prevailing practices and understanding of the nature of the cult. The proportional minority of warrior-motifs among stone objects is in line with quantitative observations we have made on other types of materials: military themes are present but do not dominate.

### 2.6.7. Other material evidence

In this category are miscellaneous objects present in small numbers, or otherwise not warranting a separate section on their own. Most of these can be seen as personal items, which later on ended up as 'raw offerings' in the sanctuary.

Jewellery (pins, beads, *fibulae*) and seals were found in Geometric to Laconian II periods.[469] These give little hint of the aspects of the goddess, but as has already been discussed in the introduction, these sorts of raw offerings were popular dedications during the Geometric and Archaic periods. From the same period came three miniature golden double axes, whose meaning has already been discussed.[470] That they are dedicated in this expensive material in addition to lead, terracotta and bone further emphasises the double axe's significance for the cult, although their particular meaning remains elusive. The pins were not published in detail in the site publication, but they were the focus of Kilian-

[467] Schattner 1990, 205-206; Catling 1994, 275. Catling also considers Artemis' typical associations (the natural world, wild nature, hunting, protectress of the young) too far removed from the household. However, it is unclear if Artemis was indeed worshipped at the sanctuary during the seventh to sixth century.
[468] Dawkins 1929d, 195; Woodward 1929a, 369, nos. 169, 14 and 169, 16-19; Pl LXXIV, all with names of dedicators. In addition to this, there were "about twenty" pieces with some cutting, but these were too small and vague for Dawkins to classify or describe (Dawkins 1929d, 195).
[469] Dawkins 1929d, 381-184. These were found in gold, silver, amber, and vitreous paste.
[470] Dawkins 1929f, 383.

Dirlmeier's study on the pins in Greek sanctuaries. In total 1400 pins were found in bronze and they were all found below the sand, i.e. before the reorganisation of the sanctuary following the flooding of the Eurotas river.[471] The large quantity and short period of time for their dedication suggests that during this earlier phase in the sanctuary's use it was associated with women's concerns. We have already seen this in other find categories above. The sudden end to this practice is probably connected with the wider trend moving away from 'raw offerings' to 'converted' as I have already noted in the Introduction, with the reorganisation of the sanctuary after the layer of sand acting as a definite moment in time when many aspects of the cultic practise were changing. Other types of evidence show that women continued to visit the sanctuary after the layer of sand, so the sudden disappearance of this find category can be seen as a change in dedicatory practice, rather than a change in focus of cult.

The bronze objects found at the sanctuary were, as described earlier, in quite poor state of preservation, because most of the were found in layers under the sand impacted by the wet conditions by the river.[472] Many of these objects have little to interpret, as there are various animal figurines (some of which may have formed parts of vessels). Two arrow heads were also found in layers below the sand layers. As already discussed in the Introduction, the meaning of these is ambiguous, as they could have been meant as reference to hunting, rather than warfare. Hodkinson describes these as spearheads, but the very small size of them (ca 5cm long) makes them more likely arrowheads.[473]

A small number of stone sculptures were dated to the Archaic period, but these give little information about the cult or the goddess.[474] From later, but undated, periods were fragments including a head of a boy, and a girl holding a bird.[475] Sculptures of children have been found in large numbers in the sanctuary of Artemis at Brauron, where rituals for girls were known to have taken place. Similar sculptures are also attested at the sanctuary of

[471] Kilian-Dirlmeier 1984, 12.
[472] Droop 1929b, 196.
[473] Hodkinson 2000, 291. Illustrated on Dawkins 1929a, pl LXXXVII and LXXXVIII.
[474] Finds included two fragments of a lion's mane, a female head, a hand, and a fragment of a lustral bowl (Dawkins 1929f, 386-390).
[475] Other fragments included a male torso, a female torso, fragment of drapery and a foot (Dawkins 1929f, 390). None of these were illustrated in the publication.

Orthia in Messene.[476] We know from literary sources that youths took part in rituals at the Orthia sanctuary, and the dedications are probably made by them or on their behalf. In addition, as has already been mentioned above, the sanctuary at Brauron also attracted dedications of clothing and pins, for which there is also evidence at the sanctuary of Orthia (among the lead dedications, and metal and bone pins). And importantly, Brauron also had the cult of several deities: Artemis and Iphigeneia. It is therefore clear that the sanctuary of Orthia was associated with children, whether these dedications were aimed at Orthia or Eileithyia.

### 2.7. Discussion: nature of the cult

After this discussion of the dedicated objects, I will summarise the main findings and go back to the question posed in the beginning: can we see that the cult of Orthia was as heavily characterized with warfare as previous research, mainly looking at the literary sources, has suggested?

The majority of specifically female related finds fall within the period before the sand layer. Following the flooding some time around 570 B.C., the sanctuary went through reorganization in terms of the architecture, and at the same time, several changes in the dedicatory patterns can also be observed.

During the centuries before the sand layer, we can find a wide range of dedications depicting women, or dedications related to women in other ways. We have a large quantity of pins, nude female figurines, sometimes depicted in a group with a nude man, as well as dedications referring to weaving and dedications of clothing (such as the bone weaving equipment and lead depictions of elaborately decorated clothing). The dedications showing a male-female pair are not many, but they suggest a male consort for the goddess. Waugh rejected this idea based on the low quantity of objects with the pairing, and because it is mostly found on ivories, which she considered to be Eastern imports.[477] It seems possible that the imagery of a divine pairing travelled with the workshops, and from ivories got transferred on the terracottas. Alternatively, since these pairings only appear on dedications

[476] References for the Brauron statues, as well as those found in other sanctuaries, see Bobou 2015, chapter 4.
[477] Waugh 2009, 6.

dated to the seventh century, it is also possible that this was a short-lived idea of the goddess Orthia that for one reason or another did not catch on.

Simultaneously, we have a female figures depicted with horse's heads. This particular motif can be found among the leads, ivories as well as terracotta. While the representations of clothing, and possibly the nude figurines, refer to female worshippers, the case of the horse-flanked female head is perhaps more likely to referred to the divine recipient. We can also find a female figures associated with other animals, such as a lion. This association with animals probably refers to the power the goddess had over wild and domesticated animals, and as an extension of that, over nature itself. Horse figurines dominate among the animal figurines during this early period, and very few are found in later periods. This coincides with a general trend found in other sanctuaries as well, and it suggests wider changes in dedicatory practises.

After the sand, there are changes among the dedicatory material. A female figurine carrying a bow appears among the leads, and among the animals we get a new species: a deer. It seems that here the focus of the goddess' control over animals now shifts towards hunting, an aspect that aligns Orthia closely with Artemis, who is often depicted as a huntress.

Could this change be associated with another change, that of the appearance of Eileithyia? The die with an inscription referring to her was dated loosely to the sixth century B.C. During the Hellenistic and Roman periods, we seem to have a building dedicated to Eileithyia nearby, as attested by the stamped roof tiles with her name. Before the appearance of a building, an altar or another structure may have been a focus of Eileithyia's worship. It seems that during this period there is a reorganisation of the cult in terms of division of functions related to women, and an introduction of an association with Artemis. The decrease of horse figurines occurs at the same time, further suggesting a shift in the cult. The numerous ithyphallic figurines are probably related to this aspect of fertility and procreation, and it is unfortunate that the publication did not give details of their find contexts, or dates. Thus, they here only add to the aspect of procreation and fertility for the sanctuary, but it is impossible to say if they were meant for Orthia or Eileithyia.

During the period of reorganization of the sanctuary, there is a find category that flourishes – the masks. The majority of them are dated to the sixth century, with a gradual change throughout the following centuries to a majority of miniature masks. These have

been interpreted as relating to a ritual invoking the 'other', and scholars have tied this with the literary evidence on rites for boys. It is possible that the sanctuary became especially associated with these rituals during this period, and the details of the rituals changed through time into the flagellation performed at the altar in various ways as described by Xenophon, Pausanias and Plutarch.

Another prominent theme that emerges from the finds is music. Figurines of musicians and musical instruments are found among the leads and bone. It seems likely that music was part of the rituals performed at the sanctuary, and the performers could dedicate their 'tools of the trade' in the sanctuary. Alternatively, perhaps the items were part of sacred equipment kept at the sanctuary for use in rituals. It is only in the Roman period that we have evidence of musical competitions held at the sanctuary (see section 2.5.3. above), but it seems that musical performance (perhaps without formal competition) was an important part of cultic activity.

Flower emphasized the martial nature of Orthia based on the numismatic evidence (see discussion above), where the cult image of the goddess was depicted armed. There is also plenty of other material evidence supporting a military aspect of the cult. The earliest object attesting the presence of this aspect are the lead warrior figurines; the earliest certain warrior is among Lead I (650-620 B.C.). Most categories of dedications had depictions of warriors, and they continue throughout the history of the sanctuary. Yet there are patterns of change that we noted above: lead warrior varieties (both male and female) reach their peak in the sixth century B.C., and shortly afterwards we get our only terracotta warrior depiction, while in ivories and bone we only see warriors in the late seventh century B.C. The carved stone warriors are dated shortly before and after the sand. So, it appears that there is a peak in the sixth century B.C., and after that the theme is mainly present among the lead figurines. But they are also the most numerous of dedications, so this by no means suggests that the military aspect was disappearing after the fifth century. There is other potential evidence for the military focus of the cult: the numismatic evidence for the cult image, which shows an armed woman with a goat. However, this particular depiction could also be instead the Apollo at Amyklai, for whom we also have other evidence showing it was an armed figure. The literary sources do not specifically describe military rituals being performed at the sanctuary. Flower's argument for the military nature of the whipping ritual relies on the cult statue being armed, as it was used in the (Roman period version of the)

ritual, but numismatic evidence for the cult image is not conclusive. The question of the Partheneion, and the context of its performance (by the girls, before the boys' initiation) and references to military units (in the sense of mission and military unit -like discipline of the chorus) could indicate an indirect military function for the whipping. However, there is no direct literary reference to a military nature for the cult.

Does the votive assemblage justify the identification of the cult as military? Was it a dominating aspect among the wide range of other aspects? When looking at all the dedications, the answer is that the military dedications do not appear to dominate the material. Life stages of both men and women are represented among the finds, and these include non-military parts of life. The presence of the Dioscuri suggests that the cult also played an important role in maintaining the power structures of the society, by referring to the dual kingship. The central location of the sanctuary within the urban area of Sparta, and the very large number of dedications, as well as several literary descriptions of the sanctuary clearly show that the cult of Orthia was central to Spartan society. The third century roof tiles indicating the use of public funds for a roof further demonstrates the public nature and significance of the cult in Spartan religious life. But it was not dominated by military concerns. Instead, we can see that female representation among the dedications is important among several categories of finds, and music played a strong role in the cult as well. The masks suggest a ritual related to a performance of opposites – with no reference to warfare in particular. While present in changing quantities throughout the history, the military aspect peaks in the sixth century B.C., and it is never in evidence in isolation. Orthia had a wide-ranging spectrum of functions throughout the history of the sanctuary.

## 3. The Sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos

### 3.1. Topography

The sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos is located east of the Eurotas river, on a natural knoll overlooking the valley, with the urban centre of Sparta in the distance to the north-west, where the acropolis sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos is located, while the sanctuary of Orthia is on the west bank of Eurotas, due north-west of the Menelaion (see fig. 2). The sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai is to the south, approximately 5km away. In the immediate area around the Menelaion there are two other archaeological sites (fig. 9). Roughly 100m to the east of the sanctuary are the remains of a Mycenaean house, the last phase of it dating to the LH IIIB2 period.[478] Some LHIIIB2 pottery was found around the sanctuary, but they were not associated with any structure and were probably from a wash level. Therefore, there does not seem to be any continuity at the sanctuary site from the Bronze age, and there is a gap of ca. 500 years before the sanctuary was set up. However, the remains of the Mycenaean house could have been visible when the sanctuary was being founded, perhaps inspiring ideas of a heroic burial at the natural knoll of the sanctuary.[479]

Roughly 250m north-east of the sanctuary, on a second knoll, a cult site was discovered during the excavations in the 1970s. Erosion had destroyed most of the evidence of the cult site, but miniature vases and terracotta horse-rider figurines identified the site as a shrine.[480] The identity of the cult recipient has not been uncovered.

Several ancient sources mention the location of the sanctuary among the ancient authors, and they call the area Therapne. Herodotus (6.61.3) says that a *hieron* of Helen is located in the area called Therapne, beyond a *hieron* of Phoebus. Polybius mentions a 'Menelaion' on the hills above Sparta (Polyb. 5.18, 21). A fragment of Alcman possibly describes Menelaos as being honoured with Dioscuri at Therapne.[481] This is the only reference to the Dioscuri being worshipped here, and Parker notes that it is likely that other

[478] Catling 2009, 19. Catling notes that there is some uncertainty on the last phase, Mansion 3, due to the excavation methods of earlier excavations at the site. Some smaller sites dating to the Bronze age were also found in the area, contemporary with the Mansion site (see Catling 2009, especially parts 2 and 3).
[479] Catling 1976/1977, 34.
[480] Catling 1976/1977, 35.
[481] Fr 7 Page/Davies; Parker forthcoming, 16. Another fragment of Alcman (fr 14 PMG/PMGF = fr 5 Calame) "holy temple (naos) of well-walled Therapnae".

evidence would have survived if the twins had been the object of cult at the sanctuary.[482] However, Pausanias (3.20.2) writes that Phoibaion was not far from Therapne and that a temple of Dioscuri was there. Therefore, Parker suggests the term Therapne included both the sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos and the Phoibaion, where the Dioscuri also had their cult, despite Pausanias separating the two areas in his description.[483]

In addition, there are references to a second cult of Helen close to the centre of Sparta. Pausanias describes a *hieron* of Helen in the area called Platanistas (3.15.3) and then adds that Helen and Menelaos' tombs were at Therapne, where Menelaos had a temple (*naos*) (Paus. 3.19.9).[484] I will return to the topic of tombs of Helen and Menelaos later on, as this has relevance to the debate on the nature of the pair (are they heroes or gods?). Neither this second sanctuary of Helen, nor the area called Platanistas, which is also known as a site of a mock-battle between Spartan youths (Paus. 3.14.8-10), have been located archaeologically.[485] Pausanias tells us that the night before the battle, the youths make sacrifices to Enyalios at the Phoibaion (again specifying that it is not far from Therapne). It is perhaps just a coincidence that a sanctuary of Helen was located close to these two locations used during the mock-battle. Pausanias lists other shrines around Platanistas as well (3.15.1-5: *heroa* of Kyniska, Alcimus, Enraephorus, Dorceus, Sebrus, and *hieron* of Heracles (and Helen), and tombs of Alcman and Oionos), so Helen is by no means the only one worshipped in the area. Theocritus (18) tells of a myth where Spartan maidens danced and sang outside Menelaos' wedding chamber, and later on would go to the area called Dromos, and place garlands on a plane-tree, on which they will carve "pay me reverence: I am Helen's plant". Parker places this possibly in or near the shrine of Helen at Platanistas.[486] I will return to the topic of dancing and worship of Helen later on.

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[482] Parker forthcoming, 16. See p. 5-6 and 15-16 for Helen's association with the Dioscuri in myth and cult. In literary sources the Dioscuri are associated with Therapne as the location where they are buried when they are not at Olympus (Pind. *Pyth*. 11.61-64; *Nem*. 10.51-57; Alcman frag. 7 Page/Davies). In *Isth*. 1.31, Pindar describes Therapne as Castor's home while he was still a mortal.
[483] Parker forthcoming, 16. Parker also suggests the Phoibaion was a sanctuary of Phoibe and Hilaeira, the brides of the Dioscuri, thus making the area a location for divine couples.
[484] Livy also mentions Mt Menelaos (34.28). No other evidence has been found for Helen's sanctuary elsewhere in Sparta.
[485] Suggested locations include south-west of the theatre (Stibbe 1989, 67), and north of the theatre (Sanders 2009, 200).
[486] Parker forthcoming, 18-19.

### 3.2. The site and history of excavations

The site is located on a natural knoll (at 280m), with the sanctuary structures located on the south-west side and the Mycenaean house on the north-east side of it (see fig. 9).

The excavations conducted in the 1970s identified several phases in the sanctuary's history. A rich, black deposit of earth and dedications on the north-east side of the currently visible shrine is the earliest phase, belonging to the late eighth to early seventh century B.C. Some blocks of soft white poros stone belong to this period, which could have formed an altar surrounded by a temenos wall. [487]

During the following phase, dated to the late seventh or early sixth century, a small building was built of poros blocks. Catling calls this the 'Old Menelaion', and it had a roof of terracotta tiles and at least one disk-acroterion. None of the blocks were found in situ, but it possibly stood on the same spot as the later structure now dominating the site.[488]

The structure visible today is dated to the fifth century B.C. The 'Old Menelaion' - structure was dismantled and replaced by a built terrace, with a ramp providing access to it from the south-west (fig. 10). A frieze of local, bluish marble, of which fragments with a triglyph have been discovered, may have crowned the revetment wall. It has been dated to the fifth century B.C. on account of its similarity to the Parthenon and could have been built after the earthquake of 464 B.C., which probably destroyed the Old Menelaion.[489] A second terrace was constructed to the east and south sides of the original terrace to give additional support.[490] On the terrace stood a small rectangular building, probably a small temple or an altar.[491] A cistern was built during this time, and remained in use until the end of activity at the sanctuary.[492]

A pit (called 'the Great Pit') was excavated to the north-east of the shrine in the 1970s. The preliminary report was written before the excavation was completed, but it was rich in dedications, including spearheads, sword fragments, and arrowheads.[493] These finds

[487] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909,112; Catling 1976-1977, 35-36.
[488] Catling 1976-1977, 36.
[489] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 110, 112. For the earthquake: Thuc. 1.101-103; Diod. 11.63; Paus. 4.24.6; Plut. *Cim*. 16.
[490] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909,112.
[491] Altar or other: Catling 1976-1977, 37; altar-tomb or small temple: Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 112.
[492] Catling 1976-1977, 37.
[493] Catling 1976-1977, 38.

are of particular interest for my inquiry. The pottery had a wide chronological range, including "every phase of Laconian".[494] Some secondary pits were cut into the Great Pit at a later time, including some broken terracotta roof tiles. Catling could not associate them with any of the known structures, as he did not think that the Classical period structure had a roof. Therefore, he speculates that there could have been a stoa nearby, but no evidence for it has been found.[495]

The latest find from the sanctuary is a second century A.D. fibula found in the 'Great Pit', suggesting that people kept visiting the sanctuary quite late in classical antiquity.[496] The latest activity before modern times is the building of a small oven near the Mycenaean Mansions, dating to the Early Christian period.[497]

The stratigraphy of the site is not as well-known as for the Orthia sanctuary, and the evidence from the early 20th century excavations comes from two areas in the north-east corner of the terrace, in the area of the Mycenaean house. These two locations are relevant to the grouping of some of the finds below, as many of them can only be dated by the associated pottery. In the first one, the first finds were from late Mycenaean period, followed by a layer of stones. Above the stones was a layer of soil without any pottery, and above that was a floor of poros chips. Directly above the floor was a layer of carbonized matter. The layer following this was rich in finds ranging from the Geometric period to a few pieces of Laconian II pottery, and this level is associated with the inception of cult at the sanctuary. Bronzes and terracottas were also found in this layer.

Above this was another layer without finds, followed by the second beaten poros floor. This floor was associated with the walls found in the area. Above the floor was a rich deposit of bronzes, leads and terracotta. The pottery was from Laconian III to some early Hellenistic ware, and the leads belonged to groups III-V. The pottery included pieces of Panathenaic amphorae.[498] This deposit is the one that has the longest period of time represented. Despite the proximity to the Mycenaean house, there does not seem to be any evidence for a cult from the Mycenaean period continuing to the later periods under investigation here.

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[494] Catling 1976-1977, 38.
[495] Catling 1976-1977, 41.
[496] Catling 1976-1977, 41.
[497] Catling 1976-1977, 41.
[498] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 113-115.

The second area is located on the east side of the platform. Here the section closest to the platform edge consisted only of an earlier floor with scarce Mycenaean pottery underneath, and Geometric, subgeometric, Proto-Corinthian, and Laconian pottery in the layer above the floor. This layer also contained some bronzes and terracottas. Towards the east, the ground slopes down, and next to a rock ridge was a layer of black earth, rich in Lead II lead figurines, Archaic terracottas and bronzes. The pottery included Laconian II and subgeometric wares. Under this layer were some Geometric and Proto-Corinthian pottery, and in the bottom of the layer some Late Mycenaean unpainted pieces.[499]

The excavations in the 1970s concentrated on an area north of the platform, and the finds represented a continuous period of use of some 700 years.[500] Unfortunately, more detailed account on this phase of the excavations is still in preparation.

The history of excavations at the Menelaion is more complex than that of the sanctuary of Orthia. The area of the sanctuary of Menelaos and Helen was first identified by Ross, who visited the site in 1834 and excavated in the area, uncovering architectural features and finding lead 'wreaths', and lead figurines, as well as some crude terracotta figurines. Only limited accounts of his activities were published.[501] Tsountas excavated at the site in the late 19th century but he only summarily described the activity, and the locations of the trenches are no longer known.[502] Kastriotis did more extensive excavation work in 1889, and published the dimensions and a reconstruction of the Classical monument.[503] In the beginning of the 20th century the British School started their project in Laconia, concentrating first on the sanctuary of Orthia. In 1909 an excavation was begun at Menelaion and a short report was published afterwards.[504] In the 1970s work continued, but concentrated on the Bronze Age site north of the sanctuary. Some excavation work was done at the Menelaion, but results have so far only been published in shorter reports.[505]

[499] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 115.
[500] Catling 1976-1977, 35.
[501] Ross 1854, 217-220; Ross 1861, 341-344.
[502] Tsountas 1890, 130-131; Catling 2009, xxvii.
[503] Kastriotis 1900.
[504] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909.
[505] Bronze age: Catling 2009. Preliminary results of the work done in 1973-1976 can be found in Catling 1976-1977. Earlier short reports: Catling 1975; Catling 1983; Catling 1986.

### 3.3. Nature of cult: Literary evidence

The nature of the cult at Therapne has been subject to discussion throughout the years. I will first discuss the matter of whether the recipients were worshipped as gods or heroes, and then move on to the interpretations of cult in more general terms.

I will focus here on the nature of the cult at the sanctuary in question, and not on the wider mythology associated with the recipients. The topic of the relationship between myth and ritual is a much larger one and requires more space than is available here. I will therefore focus on the literary sources for the cult at Sparta, and its relationship to the discussion on the military nature of Spartan religion. A recent overview of research on Helen and Menelaion can be found in Parker (forthcoming) and Edmunds (2016).

The early 20th century excavators interpreted the site as belonging to both Helen and Menelaos on account of the literary evidence.[506] The identification of the site was confirmed by the discovery of inscribed dedications. One was made on the rim of a seventh century B.C. aryballos, reading: "Deinis dedicated these objects to Helen wife of Menelaos".[507] That Helen was not the sole recipient of cult is confirmed by an inscribed stele that once supported a bronze statuette. The inscription was dated to early fifth century B.C. and reads: "Euthikrenes dedicated (this) to Menelaos".[508]

Herodotus is the earliest literary source and he mentions a *hieron* of Helen at Therapne (Hdt. 6.61), describing Helen as a goddess:

> "There was a certain Spartan who was Ariston's nearest and dearest friend. This man had a wife who was by far the fairest of Spartan women, yet albeit she was now the fairest she had been most ill-favoured. For, she being of mean aspect, her nurse having in mind that the daughter of a wealthy house was so uncomely, and that her parents took her appearance much to heart, bethought her for these reasons of a plan, and carried the child every day to the shrine of Helen, which is in the place called Therapne, above the temple of Phoebus. Thither the nurse would bear the child, and set her by the image, and pray the goddess to deliver her from her ill looks (ἐφόρεε αὐτὴν ἀνὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέρην ἐς τὸ τῆς Ἑλένης ἱρόν. τὸ δ᾽ ἐστὶ ἐν τῇ Θεράπνῃ καλεομένῃ ὕπερθε τοῦ Φοιβηίου ἱροῦ. ὅκως δὲ ἐνείκειε ἡ τροφός, πρός τε

[506] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 109.
[507] Catling 1975-1976, 14; Catling 1976-1977, 36, figs 25-27; Catling & Cavanagh 1976; *SEG* 26 457.
[508] Catling 1976-1977, 36-37, figs 28-29; *SEG* 26, 459.

τῶγαλμα ἵστα καὶ ἐλίσσετο τὴν θεὸν ἀπαλλάξαι τῆς δυσμορφίης τὸ παιδίον). Now on a day, as the nurse was departing out of the temple, a woman (it is said) appeared to her, and asked her what she bore in her arms. “It is a child,” said the nurse. “Show it to me,” said the woman. “That,” quoth the nurse, “I cannot do; for I am forbidden by the parents to show it to any.” “Nay,” said the woman, “but you must by all means show me the child.” So when the nurse saw that the woman was very desirous to see the child, she did then show it; whereupon the woman stroked the child’s head, and said that this should be the fairest of all Spartan ladies. From that day, it is said, the child’s appearance changed; and when she came to marriageable age she was wedded to that friend of Ariston, Agetus son of Alcidas.” (transl. A. D. Godley, Loeb edition)

Isocrates (*Helen*. 10.61-63) follows Herodotus, and mentions sacrifices at Therapne to both Helen and Menelaos *as gods*:

“All these personages Helen surpassed in proportion as she excelled them in the beauty of her person. For not only did she attain immortality but, having won power equalling that of a god, she first raised to divine station her brothers, who were already in the grip of Fate, and wishing to make their transformation believed by men, she gave to them honours so manifest that they have power to save when they are seen by sailors in peril on the sea, if they but piously invoke them. After this she so amply recompensed Menelaus for the toils and perils which he had undergone because of her, that when all the race of the Pelopidae had perished and were the victims of irremediable disasters, not only did she free him from these misfortunes but, having made him god instead of mortal, she established him as partner of her house and sharer of her throne forever. And I can produce the city of the Spartans, which preserves with especial care its ancient traditions, as witness for the fact; for even to the present day at Therapne in Laconia the people offer holy and traditional sacrifices to them both, not as to heroes, but as to gods (ἔτι γὰρ καὶ νῦν ἐν Θεράπναις τῆς Λακωνικῆς θυσίας αὐτοῖς ἁγίας καὶ πατρίας ἀποτελοῦσιν οὐχ ὡς ἥρωσιν ἀλλ᾽ ὡς θεοῖς ἀμφοτέροις οὖσιν).” (transl. L. R. Van Hook, Loeb edition).

Although these two sources explicitly describe how Helen and Menelaos are honoured with sacrifices as gods, or how Helen is a goddess, there has been debate over their status and nature.[509] At the beginning of the 20th C, Tod and Wace saw Helen as an earth goddess, associated with childbirth.[510] The excavators of the Menelaion agreed with the interpretation, and noted that the finds from the sanctuary supported this.[511] They had more trouble interpreting the cult of Menelaos, and noted that he could have been a male nature god, who was added to the cult of Helen at a later date,[512] however, the dedicatory inscriptions for both are attested fairly soon one after one another.[513]

In the summary of excavations conducted in the 1970s, Catling characterised the site as follows: "The shrine is thus a classic instance of cult created deliberately out of nostalgia for the Heroic past…It must be assumed that still in the eighth century B.C. there remained signs of the vanished splendours of Therapne that would have identified it as a Hero's home; it could have been that the natural knoll now enclosed by the classical shrine may have been identified as the tomb of Menelaos and Helen."[514] We have already seen that Pausanias wrote that Helen and Menalaos' tombs were located here. While there is no other evidence for this belief for earlier periods, it is possible that the natural topography may have acted as an inspiration for establishing a cult. Larson, on the other hand, associated the establishment of the cult with the spread of epic poetry, which was happening at the time the worship began at the Menelaion.[515] It is possible that both are at play here: the spread of epic poetry in general, and a suitable location with the remains of a building from a long lost time visible. But a reference to epic poetry and ancient ruins do not give us sufficient information about the nature of the cult and the recipients, so it is necessary to see how scholars interpret the evidence for and against the divine status of the cult recipients.

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[509] For a recent overview of scholarship on the mythical Helen, see Edmunds' monograph from 2016, which discusses the myths related to her (especially chapters 3 and 5). Here I am focusing on Helen as an object of cult, at Sparta (Edmunds discusses this in chapter 4).
[510] Tod & Wace 1906, 117-118. See also Nilsson 1906, 426.
[511] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 109. They also supported this by noting the similarity with finds from the sanctuary of Orthia, who was also thought to be an earth/mother goddess (see section 2.1. above). No particular finds were highlighted to support the interpretation.
[512] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 109.
[513] In addition to those already mentioned, see also Catling 1977, 400-415; 1986, 205-216.
[514] Calting 1976/1977, 34.
[515] Larson 1995, 81.

Calame separated the two known cult locations of Helen at Sparta in terms of her status. At Therapne, she was worshipped as a goddess, while in her cult in the city, in the area called Platanistas, she was worshipped as a heroine (I will discuss the evidence for rituals associated with that place below). Calame see opposites at work here: this difference has to do with Helen's changing status from an adolescent, worshipped as a heroine at Platanistas, to a married woman, worshipped as a goddess at Therapne, along with Menelaos.[516] Larson criticised this view, and saw influence of Isocrates at play with the suggestion that the cult at Therapne was that of a goddess. For her, the situation is the opposite: since the foundation of cult at Therapne coincides with the period when hero cults were being established around Greece, and epic poetry was being disseminated, the cult at Therapne was more likely that of a heroine, while the cult at Platanistas was that of a goddess.[517]

Parker argues that the available evidence suggests that both Helen and Menelaos were gods.[518] The architecture of the sanctuary is to him too elaborate and of too large a scale for heroes. Roof tiles to be published in the forthcoming *Menelaion II* -volume have stamps suggesting a public significance of the cult.[519] And finally, Parker highlights the similarities in the assemblages of dedications found at the Menelaion and the sanctuary of Orthia, a goddess.[520] In addition, there is a lack of dedications suggesting that the recipients were considered to be heroes. A sanctuary (*hieron*) of Agamemnon and Cassandra/Alexandra near Amyklai features a similar male-female pair famous from the myth of the Trojan war.[521] Parker compares the finds between these two sanctuaries and highlights a major difference between the sanctuaries: no hero reliefs were found at the Menelaion, whereas at the sanctuary of Agamemnon and Cassandra/Alexandra over a thousand of these relief plaques were found during the excavations, dating from the late

[516] Calame 2001, 195-196.
[517] Larson 1995, 81.
[518] Parker forthcoming, 2-3.
[519] Parker forthcoming, 2. Spawforth forthcoming, D1, reconstructed Δαμόσιος, which Spawforth identifies as an inscription referring to state property (p. 14). Other stamps refer to the eponymous *patronomos* for the year of production. See discussion on p. 19-23. I thank Professor Spawforth for giving his draft of the inscriptions chapter.
[520] Parker forthcoming, 2. For Orthia, see chapter 2.
[521] For the location and overview of excavations, see Salapata 2014, chapter 1.

sixth to the late fourth centuries B.C.[522] Therefore, in addition to the literary sources specifically describing the sanctuary as that of *gods*, not *heroes*, Parker interprets the site not as a hero shrine, but a sanctuary of gods.[523] The reference in Pausanias (3.19.9) that Helen and Menelaos were buried at the site does not necessarily mean that there was a tomb cult here (which would suggest that the pair were thought to be heroes). Parker notes that the formulation "they say that Helen and Menelaos are buried here" (3.19.9) is not reliable due to the great distance in time to the period of the cult, and that this is even discordant with an earlier reference to a *naos* of Menelaos.[524] In other words, if there is no built tomb where a cult was held, this reference does not suggest a hero cult.

Edmunds holds the opposing view. He interprets the reference τὴν θεὸν as a way for Herodotus to distinguish the goddess herself from her *agalma* as the object of the prayer (πρός τε τῶγαλμα ἵστα καὶ ἐλίσσετο τὴν θεὸν ἀπαλλάξαι τῆς δυσμορφίης τὸ παιδίον).[525] Edmunds points here towards the idea that Greek deities were thought to inhabit temples and cult statues, but that they could also sometimes leave them. Therefore, in this reference in Herodotus the nurse prays to Helen, addressing her as separate from her statue, necessitating making a distinction in the text by using the word goddess.[526] Edmunds is also critical of Isocrates' description of the recipients of sacrifices "as gods". He argues that Isocrates' description of Helen's "godlike power" does not suggest that she is a goddess. In Edmund's argument the immortality of Helen came from her great beauty, and to emphasize her uniqueness Isocrates composes an otherwise unknown story where she elevates even her brothers and husband to gods with her powers.[527] In his view, Helen falls under a 'standard definition of hero': "a deceased person who exerts from his grave a power for good or evil and who demands appropriate honours".[528] The reference to

[522] Salapata 2014, 2.
[523] Parker forthcoming, 2-3. Parker notes that sometimes literary sources use the word 'gods' instead of 'hero', but that his argument does not solely rely on this (Parker forthcoming, 3). See also Kearns 1989, 125 for the Athenian heroes.
[524] Parker forthcoming, 3.
[525] Edmunds 2016, 185-186.
[526] Edmunds also highlights a similar situation elsewhere, where the mother of Cleobis and Biton prays to Hera by her statue: "στᾶσα ἀντίον τοῦ ἀγάλματος εὔχετο Κλεόβι τε καὶ Βίτωνι τοῖσι ἑωυτῆς τέκνοισι, οἵ μιν ἐτίμησαν μεγάλως, τὴν θεὸν δοῦναι τὸ ἀνθρώπῳ τυχεῖν ἄριστον ἐστί."
(Hdt. 1.31.4; Edmunds 2016, 185-186).
[527] Edmunds 2016, 178-179. In Xenophon it is Zeus who made the Dioscuri immortal (Xen. *Sym*. 8.28).
[528] Edmunds 2016, 180, quoting Burkert 1985, 203.

sacrifices "as to gods" is used to highlight that the sacrifices took a form similar to those made for gods, not that the recipients were gods.[529]

In light of the evidence for Helen and Menelaos, it is not possible to say conclusively if they were thought to be heroes or gods, although as Parker notes, their sanctuary lacks the material commonly found in Spartan hero cults: the hero-reliefs.[530] With Edmunds' definition of hero-cult, the issue of the tombs of Helen and Menelaos is central. The only evidence for this is Pausanias, already mentioned above. On the other hand, the only evidence for the god-status comes from two sources, which could be dismissed on stylistic grounds. It is perhaps sufficient to say that there is no conclusive evidence either way, but there seems to be something special about Helen that warrants the mentions of the different sacrifices than would be expected. So, maybe she, and Menelaos, were thought of as heroes, but that they had a special standing within the category of heroes, which led to the unusual sacrifices (and which would explain the lack of hero-reliefs at the sanctuary).

### 3.3.1. Rituals related to Helen

There are a range of rituals that have been connected with Helen at Sparta. None of them specifically describe rituals taking place at Therapne, and the sanctuary at Platanistas is an alternative location for rituals in her honour.

An emphasis on the connection between Helen and young girls is also found in Flower's work, where he refers to footraces along the river Eurotas, as well as libations and wreaths placed under a plane tree during a festival held in honour of Helen mentioned earlier (Theocritus*, Marriage Song for Helen*). However, Flower notes that the source may not be reliable as Theocritus lived in Egypt and thus the accuracy of the description should be treated with caution.[531] There is no mention of the sanctuary in Theocritus' description either, and it is unknown if the rituals performed at the Menelaion were related to those closer to the city centre, in the area called Platanistas (named so after the plane-trees growing there). It is possible that the festival described in Theocritus, if it were historical, would have been connected to the sanctuary where plane trees grew, and not the one

[529] Edmunds 2016, 181. He quotes other similar phrases in Pindar (Ol. 7, 77-80), and a scholiast to who explains the particular form of sacrifice as an explanation for the phrasing (Σ, Pind. *Ol*. 7.141.1).
[530] Parker forthcoming, 3. See also Ekroth 2002, 206-213, on sacrifices as to a hero/god.
[531] Flower 2017, 442.

much further away, at the Menelaion, but it is also equally possible that Theocritus reflects a conflation of traditions about the Spartan cults of Helen.

Parker combines evidence for the worship of Helen at Sparta in general, and notes the importance of her cult to Spartan girls of marriageable age.[532] This is confirmed among the dedications discussed below, as loom weights, whorls, and lead models of clothing were among the finds. In sum, textual sources on the cult suggest a focus on female concerns and a lack of military agenda.

### 3.3.2. Military rituals?

Flower finds a military connection for the Menelaion in that the construction of the rectangular terrace at the beginning of the fifth century B.C. was in his opinion connected to the military success at Plataea under Spartan leadership. Menelaos was the mythical king of Sparta during the Trojan war, a war that "almost immediately came to be seen as the mythical analogue of the Persian Wars".[533] In addition, he highlights a fragment of Simonides, connecting Menelaos to warfare.[534] The fragment mentions Menelaos as having fought (along with Castor and Pollux) at the battle of Plataea (frag 11.29-31 W2). Based on this fragment, it has recently even been suggested that an effigy of Menelaos could have travelled with the Spartan army the way the Dioscuri did.[535] This is difficult to say, and perhaps an overinterpretation of the source. Thus, for Flower the sanctuary was associated with the rituals of girls connected to Helen, and warfare connected to Menelaos. Parker agrees and sees Menelaos associated with warfare based on the Simonides fragment, and more generally as a protector of Sparta.[536] On their own, these indicators might seem as a rather thin basis for suggesting a military association for a hero who does not come across as very heroic in the epic tradition (e.g. Menelaos of the Odyssey is a rather docile, almost

[532] Parker forthcoming, 21. He also acknowledges that there is no way to determine if the rituals performed in unspecified locations were connected with worship at the Menelaion (p. 21-22). Edmunds does not comment on the nature of the cult at Therapne but focuses on the question of hero/god (2016, 183-185).
[533] Flower 2017, 432.
[534] Flower 2017, 431-432.
[535] Catling 2002, 218, n. 121.
[536] Parker forthcoming, 22-23.

comic figure), but comparanda can be adduced for other epic heroes whose heroic pedigree more explicitly translated into cultic function, e.g. the Aiakids on Aegina.[537]

To conclude, the literary evidence is quite limited on the rituals and nature of the cult at the Menelaion. Some researchers have suggested a military nature for the cult, and connected this especially with Menelaos, however, very little focus has been placed on interpreting the archaeological evidence found at the sanctuary. Therefore, in the next section I will give an overview of the dedications as important evidence for understanding the character of the cult, and discuss the presence of military dedications and the significance of their relative quantities in the assemblage. I will also observe some similarities with the types of dedications found at the sanctuary of Orthia already described in the previous chapter.

[537] See Polinskaya 2013, 136-140.

### 3.4. Menelaion: material evidence

#### 3.4.1. Pottery

The pottery found at the sanctuary does not display iconography suggesting a military character for the cult. Only a very short summary was published of the pottery found during the early 20th century excavations. The earlier period pottery (before Laconian III) shows animal and floral decorations, and flat dishes and bowls were "frequent" during Laconian II according to Droop, who wrote the summary.[538] Droop gave no quantities of the pottery, but the excavation results from the 1970s should provide more information once they are published. The types of pottery can be connected with dining at the sanctuary, but the lack of detail prevents from making more detailed conclusions. Undoubtedly, once the most recent excavations are published, we will have much more information about the rituals performed at the sanctuary.

However, there are two particular groups of pottery that can contribute to our knowledge of the use of the sanctuary already now. First, there were "several pieces" of Panathenaic amphorae dated to 530-520 B.C.[539] These give proof that this sanctuary, and Helen and Menelaos, were important enough to compete with the other recipient for this type of pottery at Sparta, Athena Chalkioikos, whose sanctuary will be discussed below in chapter 5. There the pieces showed images of chariot races and form a part of a group of dedications referring to equestrian victories. Unfortunately, the pieces from the Menelaion are not properly published, Brandt noted only that one fragment shows part of a cock and some tongue pattern.[540] But it is clear that while the sanctuary was quite a distance from the central urban Sparta, the display of victory amphorae was still considered appropriate. As to who dedicated the vases, we can say that they were more probably male than female, due to a much larger proportion of men participating in the competitions than women.[541]

[538] Droop 1908/1909, 157.
[539] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 114, give no exact number of pieces. Brandt 1978, 6, no 45, only lists one, as does Bentz (1998, 129, 6.067). The date is from Bentz (1998, 128) who includes the one fragment to the Euphiletos painter -group.
[540] Brandt 1978, 6.
[541] See Tracy & Habicht 1991.

However, there are some women victors (in equestrian competitions) and even one Spartan woman, leaving this option open, although perhaps less likely.[542]

Secondly, as in the sanctuary of Orthia, numerous miniature vases were found at the Menelaion.[543] Unlike other potential uses of pottery (see discussion in section 2.6.1) miniature shapes certainly served only a religious purpose, and they have been found in large numbers in various sanctuaries across Greece, even if their particular meaning remains uncertain.[544]

Most importantly for our inquiry here, the pottery found at the sanctuary helps to date the other finds, as the three main deposits are dated with the associated pottery.

### 3.4.2. Lead figurines

Military dedications were found in significant quantities among the lead objects from the Menelaion, and the types that were found are fairly similar to those found in the sanctuary of Orthia discussed above. One peculiar find is a helmeted musician, which possibly suggests a connection between warfare and music at the sanctuary. But let us first consider the issues of context and typology for the lead figurines found at the Menelaion.

The problems of lead figurines and their typology and chronology as they related to the sanctuary of Orthia were addressed above in section 2.6.3. If the typology of the figurines based on the finds from the sanctuary of Orthia is *not* to be trusted, however, then the only way we can distinguish different periods at the Menelaion is by the stratigraphy and the finds found together with the lead figurines in this local context. This means dismissing some of the typological interpretations given by Wace, who made comments on the popularity of certain figurines among the different Lead categories known from the sanctuary of Orthia. With the help of the stratigraphic situation at the Menelaion, the published lead figurines can be divided into three groups: (1): leads found with Geometric, Proto-Corinthian, and Laconian I pottery (eighth century to 620 B.C.) – these were located above the lower floor in the north-eastern corner of the platform; (2): leads found with Laconian II (620-580 B.C.) and some subgeometric pottery (mid-seventh century) in the

[542] Women in general: Tracy & Habicht 1991, 213-214, all dated to the Hellenistic period. The Spartan woman is Olympia, daughter of Agetor, dating from the early second century B.C. (Tracy & Habicht 1991, 214).
[543] Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 114.
[544] Hammond 1998.

layer of black earth on the eastern slope; (3): leads found with pottery from Laconian III (580-550 B.C.) onwards in the layer above the upper floor in the north-eastern corner of the platform.[545] In many cases, the publication did not specify how many figurines were found, or even how many different types existed, as in the case of lead figurines from the sanctuary of Orthia described above. Gill and Vickers noted that "well over half of" the almost 6000 lead dedications were wreaths.[546] Thus, this section will be slightly different than the corresponding one from that sanctuary, but relevant information about the quantities of each type or variety will be provided when possible. It is assumed that the figurines on the illustrations represent all numbers of varieties unless Wace has stated otherwise, so when he writes that there are 29 varieties of winged females in the second group, and the illustration only shows 19, the higher number is trusted. In the case of the winged females from the third group, 8 are illustrated but there is no mention on the number of varieties in the text. Here the 8 from the illustration is taken as representing all the varieties.[547] As already discussed in the chapter on leads from the sanctuary of Orthia above, the varieties of a type (such as a warrior) refer to changes in the details of the figurine that otherwise maintains the general look of it the same (i.e. a warrior is a male figurine that carries arms and armour): the difference between varieties involves e.g. changes in the shield device).

In the first group, lead figurines found with Geometric, Proto-Corinthian, and Laconian I pottery, we have two fragments of women, two warriors, three rings, a disc, one ball, a plaque with geometric decoration, spike wreaths and a scarab ring. Although warriors were found in the same deposit as the other objects, but Wace considered it probable that they were from a later date.[548] Similarly as at the sanctuary of Orthia, the warrior-type is present during the earliest periods alongside other types.

The second group, figurines found with Laconian II and some subgeometric pottery had a large number of figurines, 1523 in total. These were classified as Lead II. 29 varieties of winged females were found, among which two that hold a lion in each hand, depicting the Mistress of Animals. There are 20 different varieties of women in addition to the winged

[545] Wace 1908/1909, 129; Wace & Thompson 1908/1909, 115. For the pottery dates, see section 2.1.1. above.
[546] Gill and Vickers 1984, 23.
[547] Wace 1908/1909, p. 130 and fig. 6 for the winged females from the second group; p. 135 and fig. 9 for the winged figurines from the third group.
[548] Wace 1908/1909, 129.

females, 1 female lyre player, and one female head. Among the male figurines are 28 varieties of warriors, 1 helmeted flute player, one satyr, and one man with no attributes. Among the animals, cocks are frequent, and there are also goats, horses (5 varieties, 50 figurines in total), sphinxes (8 varieties), lions (8 varieties), and bull's heads. In addition to these, there are grilles (probably representing clothing), miniature jewellery (pins, rings), decorated discs, decorated rectangular pieces, possible imitations of clothing, and wheels.[549] Finally, we have the numerous miniature wreaths of different types. Some are spiked, some have round attachments, some possibly pomegranate buds.[550] While this group of finds was dated to a much shorter period of time (subgeometric to Laconian II, i.e. mid-seventh century to 620-580 B.C.) than the first one (eighth century to 620 B.C.), we can see that the total number of figurines is much higher, and there is a much wider range of different types of figurines. The grilles, which probably represent clothing, are a new important type introduced during this period. This mirrors the development at the sanctuary of Orthia, where the earlier categories of leads had much fewer types of figurines.

The third, and final, group was found with Laconian III pottery (580-550 B.C.) and onwards. This deposit had the largest number of lead figurines, 2,748 from the British excavations and 352 from the excavations by Ross and Kastriotis, 3,100 in total.[551] This is again similar to the situation at the sanctuary of Orthia, where Lead III saw a sharp rise in the total quantity of figurines. Among the anthropomorphic figurines we can see a range of divinities and humans. This group had a large number of warriors, 24 varieties in total, although this is a decrease from the earlier group.[552] There are also two varieties of bowmen, three of nude men, and one man with a loin cloth, as well as two varieties of Poseidon (man with a trident), one nude man on horseback, and one centaur.

There are 8 varieties of the winged female, 8 Athenas (female wearing a helmet, with aegis and a spear), 2 other goddesses (female wearing a helmet, aegis and a bow), 1 gorgon, 18 varieties of women, 3 varieties of female flute-players, 2 varieties of male lyre-players, 6 varieties of male flute-players. Among the animals, there are 4 varieties of horses, 3 of lions, one of sphinxes, one of birds, one of goats, and 5 of cocks. Of the animal heads,

[549] Wace 1908/1909, 129-130, 132-133, 135.
[550] Wace 1908/1909, 135.
[551] Wace 1908/1909, 135.
[552] Wace 1908/1909, 135, 137. The illustration shows 25 warriors, but no 8 and 13 have the same dimensions and are probably made with the same mould (Wace 1908/1909, fig 10, p. 138).

there is one variety of bull's heads and two quite fragmentary pieces of the type with two horse heads flanking a woman.[553] Deer also appear in this group of dedications, with 6 varieties in total. The appearance of deer, and a female wearing a helmet, with aegis and a bow, occurs at the same time as at the sanctuary of Orthia. There these new types led researchers to assume that the earlier, local goddess Orthia was at this time getting connected with Artemis, but considering that the development is similar here, we should be more cautious. As already discussed in chapter 2, it is possible that Orthia and Helen shared characteristics already earlier, and therefore both attracted similar dedications by sharing similar aspects of divine power, which in this case has likely to do with protecting children and overseeing their transition towards adulthood. At the sanctuary of Orthia this process did for some reason finally lead to Orthia becoming assimilated with Artemis, while Helen stayed independent. This could be due to Helen being known as a panhellenic character in myth, who had her own identity, while Orthia was a very local goddess with no other cult locations elsewhere (until the establishment of the cult at Messene in the fourth century B.C.).[554] That could have made Orthia more susceptible to a panhellenic association with Artemis.

Among more miscellaneous finds, there are representations of jewellery, palm branches, a framed amphora, rings, mirrors, grilles, and very numerous wreaths with spikes, pomegranate buds, or balls (spike wreaths being the most common, 1,370 in total for this group).[555] The framed amphoras are already known from the sanctuary of Orthia and are shown to be a probable reference to the Dioscuri. Their appearance here could have a similar meaning as at the sanctuary of Orthia, where I already discussed their connection with Spartan kingship. However, at the Menelaion they are in a very different context: mythologically the twins are related to Helen, and therefore make for a very suitable 'visiting god'. But in addition, Menelaos being a mythical king of Sparta, the Dioscuri's connection with Spartan kingship also makes this is a suitable dedication here.

I have already discussed the lead miniature wreaths above (see 2.6.3). While their meaning is ambiguous, as wreaths could be used in a wide range of rituals, Edmunds sees

[553] Wace 1908/1909, 137, 139. The horse's heads flanking a woman is known from the sanctuary of Orthia among Lead I, II, III-IV (Wace 1929, 266-267, fig 123) as well as in ivory (Dawkins 1929e, 241) and terracotta (Dawkins 1929c, 149).
[554] Themelis 1994, 101-106; 2000, 10.
[555] Wace 1908/1909, 139, 141.

the ones from the Menelaion as having a specific meaning: she draws a parallel to weddings, and quotes Stesichorus (fr. 187 PMG; Athen. 3. 81d), who describes wreaths, flowers and apples being thrown on Menelaos' chariot (assumed to be the wedding chariot of Helen and Menelaos).[556] While there is plenty of evidence for rituals related to women at the sanctuary here, the connection with marriage rituals stands on less firm ground. For Edmunds, the story in Herodotus about the childhood transformation of the wife of Ariston shows how she, with the help of Helen, acquired qualities that made her eligible for marriage.[557] Thus, for Edmunds, there is a marriage connection in Helen's cult at Therapne, and the fragment of Stesichorus connects the wreaths found here to marriage rituals. While this is a possibility, there is no reason to rule out other alternatives, as wreaths were used in such a wide range of different ways in Greek cult. The connection between marriage rituals in particular and the cult of Helen at Therapne is less certain.

Although the information from the Menelaion does not allow us to say much about the change in time for the popularity of the warrior type, we can conclude that it had a significant presence at the sanctuary. The 28 varieties of warriors for the Laconian II and subgeometric –group is more than at the sanctuary of Orthia (where 18 varieties were found during Laconian II), although there is no information about the total quantities from either of the sites. That the dedicators chose to dedicate warrior figurines with more variation in shield devices or helmets may have had to do with where and how the objects were manufactured and sold, with a larger range of variations ending up here for some unknown reason. Generally, the warrior figurines found at the Menelaion are very similar to the ones found at the sanctuary of Orthia, and it seems that during the same period of time, dedicators could use the same figurines as offerings at either location, suggesting that both sets of deities had military connotations and similar dedications (warrior figurines) were required by custom at both.

Musicians-figurines are also present here, but interestingly no dancing or *komast* figurines were found, which could indicate a lack of ritual dancing or a smaller scale of dancing and music at this sanctuary than at the sanctuary of Orthia. A notable figurine, although represented by only one example, is a helmeted flute player. Does this mean that

[556] Edmunds 2016, 176.
[557] Edmunds 2016, 176.

there were musical performances done wearing armour? We do have references to music being played during and after battle, with this figurine possibly be referring to that custom.[558]

Among representations of divinities, the picture is narrower than at the sanctuary of Orthia. In the group of Subgeometric and Laconian II, we have the first occurrence of mythological beings represented by winged females, in addition to a figurine of satyr. The last group from Laconian III onwards (580-550 B.C.) sees visiting gods with Athenas, armed women with a bow, and Poseidons. In addition, there was the framed amphora –type, which is also found in the sanctuary of Orthia, and which probably refers to the Dioscuri.

Among the non-military types, horses and horse riders appear in the second and third groups, showing that this motif becomes established during the Archaic period and perhaps continues even after that. Horse riders were very common in terracotta, and the discussion on their meaning will continue there. Also noteworthy are the grilles, which were discussed in the corresponding section for the sanctuary of Orthia. These probably depicted dedications of clothing, suggesting that Helen was also overseeing life stages of women.

What can the lead figurines tell us about the ideas the worshippers had of the divinities at the sanctuary? It seems that the military aspect was present from the beginning, with an increase during the Laconian II (620-580 B.C.), followed by a slight decrease in the subsequent period, when armed female figurines were introduced. The disappearance of the winged females after Laconian II and the appearance of armed women could indicate a stronger tie to the military aspect at the sanctuary during the later Archaic and Classical periods. Together with the warrior figurines found among all of the three

[558] Thucydides (5.70) emphasises a non-religious explanation for playing music during battle "After this the conflict commenced, the Argives and their allies advancing eagerly and impetuously, but the Lacedaemonians slowly and to the music of many flute-players placed among them according to custom, *not with any religious motive*, but in order that they might march up with even step an keeping time without breaking their order, as large armies are apt to do in going into battle." (transl. C. Forster Smith, Loeb edition, my italics). Lucian (Luc. *Salt*. 10-12) gives another non-religious comment on the music the Spartan army played on campaign. He writes that the Spartans do everything with the aid of Muses, even when going to battle they play music to keep the marching in cohesion, and the signal for battle was made with a flute. According to him, music and rhythm helped Sparta to conquer everyone.
Xenophon (Xen. *Hell*. 4.3.21) describes post-battle music: "And in the morning Agesilaus gave orders that Gylis, the polemarch, should draw up the army in line of battle and set up a trophy, that all should deck themselves with garlands in honour of the god, and that all the flute-players should play."(transl. C. L. Brownson, Loeb edition).

groups, the leads suggest that the military aspect of the divinities was broadly important to the worshippers visiting the sanctuary.

The similarities between leads found at the Menelaion and in the sanctuary of Orthia suggest that the divinities worshipped at these sites shared not only the military aspect, but also other social aspects. For instance, female concerns were definitely present alongside military ones in the votive assemblage. I will come back to this in the concluding remarks for the chapter.

### 3.4.3. Terracotta

The terracotta objects from the sanctuary did not include any military-themed dedications. This observation gains further importance as the correlation between the medium of production and the subject matter is observed at the sanctuary of Orthia, where only one dedication among the terracottas, a relief, depicted a warrior. However, the other terracottas can shed a light on the divinities' other aspects, and therefore they are discussed here. The majority (some 150 out of about 300) of the terracottas were found in the deposit on the east side of the platform, with Laconian II pottery (group 2). Unfortunately, due to the excavation methods, the subdivisions for the rest are the same as for the leads: (1): those found with pottery of the Geometric, Proto-Corinthian, and Laconian I, (2): those found with Laconian II, and (3): those found with Laconian III and later. [559]

In the earliest group with Geometric, Proto-Corinthian, and Laconian I pottery (eighth century to 620 B.C.): There are 5 animals and two humans, and a fragment of a plaque with three men showing them from waist down.[560] The human figurines are not easy to interpret. One wears a conical hood with holes for the eyes, and it may have been attached to a horse. The other two fragments show a head, and a plaque with three men striding towards right.[561] These objects do not give much information about the nature of the divinities or the character of the cult.

[559] Thompson 1908/1909, 116.
[560] Thompson 1908/1909, 117, 119. Among the animals, we find a bird, a lion, a mouse and possibly a goat.
[561] Thompson 1908/1909, 117, 119.

The second group was found with Laconian II pottery (620-580 B.C.). Here we again find animals as well as humans.[562] The human figurines are all more or less fragmentary. There are two fragmented females wearing necklaces, one wearing a polos, a male holding his hands up to its upper chest, and a plaque showing two women and a third figure to the far right. Ivory plaques from the sanctuary of Orthia show two women, or two women flanking a man, but there is no example of three women.[563]

While these two groups were separated chronologically by the dates of the pottery found with the figurines, Thompson also discussed some terracotta objects ranging from the first to the second group, i.e. from Geometric to Laconian II, as well as finds for which it was not possible to determine a date with the help of the pottery.[564] Thus, these figurines have a very wide chronological scope. Many of them are fragmentary, and I list here only pieces that could be identified.

There are only two animals, a ram, and a horse, the rest are all human. These simple types can be identified as seven female protomai, three simple heads, three simple female figurines, a nude male figurine, one handmade figurine with its hand in front of its mouth, and three bread-kneading figurines.[565] The last type has already been analysed in the chapter on terracottas from the sanctuary of Orthia and need not be repeated here. The type probably referred to household duties of women or preparations for a festival.

During the more recent excavations, two terracotta bells were found in a context with Laconian I to Laconian III -pottery. These excavation results have not yet been published, but Villing described the two bells in her article on the bells found at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos. The two bells are fragmentary, and ca 6cm high, with no clapper preserved. Due to their shape being slightly different than the bells found in the sanctuary of Athena, Villing considered these to be slightly earlier than the acropolis bells.[566] In addition to these two terracotta bells, one bronze bell was found at the Menelaion as well (see below). I will discuss these objects with the bronze bell below.

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[562] Thompson 1908/1909, 119, 121. Among the animals, there are three lions, two fragments of birds, a hare, a head of a horse, a head of a ram, a sphinx, a possible frog, and an unidentifiable animal with legs bent underneath it

[563] See section 2.6.4.

[564] Thompson 1908/1909, 121.

[565] Thompson 1908/1909, 123.

[566] Villing 2002, 251, n. 49.

The third group has the widest chronological scope being from Laconian III onwards (580-550 B.C.). Some of these were found on the surface, and some were found by Kastriotis at the end of the 19th century.

Only two animals are included in this group: a small bird and a horse.[567] Among the humans, horse riders were the dominant group: Thompson notes that a large number of them were found in the structure in the NE corner of the platform (fig. 11). The horse riders were found in all of the three chronological groups listed here, although in the third group they were the most numerous.[568] It is not possible to determine the sex for many of the riders, but Thompson notes that most are "certainly female" and she thought they represented Helen. Some horse riders are seated side-saddle, some are seated astride.[569] Side-saddle riders have been studied by Voyatzis, who investigated the type from the Bronze age to the Archaic period, as was mentioned above in connection with the Orthia terracottas. She dated the Menelaion examples to the sixth century and noted that the terracotta side-saddle riders' relative popularity in Laconia may be due to its association with Helen and Orthia.[570] Why would Helen be associated with a horse, and could these have been intended for Menelaos? To answer the latter question first, Voyatzis noticed that the side-saddle riders from the Peloponnese are primarily found in sanctuaries of goddesses, as also mentioned earlier.[571] Thus it seems more probable that the figurines were intended for Helen. Why then did she receive this offering? Voyatzis notes the frequency of horse and female figure among the dedications from the sanctuary of Orthia and proposes an influence of that tradition on the dedications at the Menelaion.[572] Perhaps here Helen was being shown as a divinity connected with horses, similarly as Orthia was connected with the animal. We already saw there were also horses among the lead figurines as well, again as at the sanctuary of Orthia. To attribute the appearance of the type at the Menelaion by the influence from Orthia is only to shift the question, however, not to answer it fully: we still must then ask why Orthia received the offering of female horse

[567] Thompson 1908/1909, 124 and fig. 5: 85 (bird) and 76 (horse).
[568] Thompson 1908/1909, 124, 126.
[569] Thompson 1908/1909, 124.
[570] Voyatzis 1992, 274.
[571] She lists approximately 18 dedicated to Artemis, four to Hera, one to Athena Alea, one to Demeter, in addition to the five from the Menelaion (Voyatzis 1992, 274).
[572] Voyatzis 1992, 277.

riders? And how were Orthia and Helen connected? I will address this in the end of this chapter when I make notes on some other similarities between the two, and Athena, as well. But the similarity among the dedications indicates that these two goddesses were both associated with fertility and nature.

Other human figurines include two nude figurines with pointed headdresses/hats in black glaze thought to be from a "late date", a simple handmade seated figurine, fragments of female figurines, *hydrophoroi*, and one seated figurine.[573] The majority of these figurines are quite anonymous, but the *hydrophoroi* are a special type. These women carrying water jars are found in several sanctuaries. Their meaning can be seen as twofold: they can depict water carriers participating in ritual processions, or symbolise water needed for agricultural fertility, the bridal bath, or rituals surrounding death.[574] As I already discussed in the introduction, the ambiguity of different dedications can be intentional and the particular context of dedication would have given the meaning to the dedicator. But considering Helen's connection with girls and marriage, perhaps these figurines were associated with asking her for help in matrimony, or ritual baths related to marriage.

Terracotta loom weights were also found in unspecified numbers on the "upper strata".[575] These possibly refer to the household work of women and were probably meant as dedications for Helen. Among the leads we had model textiles, and the presence of loom weights further emphasises Helen's connection with women.

To conclude this section, we must ask what is the overall picture of the worship of Menelaos and Helen that emerges from these figurative representations and other terracotta objects? The first two groups of figurines represent only the Archaic period, when the horse rider type is introduced to the sanctuary, and points towards one or both of the recipients being associated with horses, sharing this aspect with Orthia. Alongside that, the bread-kneader could be a more general reference to household duties or illustrating preparation of special food offerings for the cult, while loom-weights and hydrophoroi refer to women and their household or ritual activities. Otherwise, other types of figurines are very scanty and give little evidence for specific aspects of cult. The later Archaic period and

[573] Thompson 1908/1909, 124.
[574] Merker 2000, 324.
[575]Thompson 1908/1909, 124. Thompson was being vague about their location in the stratigraphy and no other information was given.

the subsequent periods saw the increase in popularity of the male and female horse riders. There was also more variation among the terracottas than before, but these remain fairly anonymous. However, loom weights further refer to Helen's importance to the female worshippers. Lead grilles, representing dedications of clothing also point towards the significance of the cult for women. It is notable that no warriors were depicted among the terracottas, and there were also no identifiable divinities, despite these being quite prominent among the lead figurines. All in all, terracotta dedications overwhelmingly point to female concerns and female worshippers of the cult.

### 3.4.4. Bronzes

Among the bronzes, some dedications can only tentatively be said to refer to the military aspect. The double axe's military connection has been discussed above. The quantities here are small. The meaning of a single arrowhead found among the bronzes is also ambiguous, as it could have related to hunting, and the tiny quantity renders it insignificant. Once again, it is important to present an overview of the whole assemblage to gauge the place of the military aspect and of the overall character of the cult.

The material is divided into the three groups already known from previous sections. From the Geometric, Proto-Corinthian and Laconian I periods (eighth century to 620 B.C.), the finds included a female figurine, jewellery and other ornaments (pins, rings, decorated strips).[576] Wace also mentions an unillustrated bronze mask similar to a female protome made of a sheet of bronze.[577] With Laconian II (620-580 B.C.) were found jewellery and other ornaments (rings, pins, pendants (among them bull's heads), fibulae, rosettes, strips, two miniature double axes, a simple nude male figurine, a female protome, and a fragment of a lion's head).[578] With Laconian III and later, there were again jewellery and other ornaments (rings, pins, strips), a bell, and an unillustrated arrowhead.[579] As with many other groups of dedications, there are significantly fewer pins found here at the Menelaion than at the sanctuary of Orthia, 62 in total in Kilian-Dirlmeier's catalogue.[580] The jewellery

[576] Wace 1908/1909, 144, 146.
[577] Wace 1908/1909, 144, 146.
[578] Wace 1908/1909, 144, 146, 148.
[579] Wace 1908/1909, 148, 149.
[580] Kilian-Dirlmeier 1984, 323-324.

found among all groups is probably indicative of female worshippers, which together with other finds such as models of clothing and loom weights shows that during the Archaic, and possibly later periods, the sanctuary was important to female worshippers. As I already wrote above, warrior figurines are again absent, but the two double axes and arrowhead may have been a reference to the military aspect, however, for both these objects this meaning is uncertain. The argument for the military aspect of the divinities at Menelaion does not rely on these objects, however, so their ambiguous meaning does not have an impact on the overall conclusions.

I already mentioned among the terracottas the one bronze bell found here, and in total there are three bells found at the Menelaion. Bronze bells are common among the dedications at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos, where they are also found both in metal and terracotta. Villing studied Spartan bells from the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos and after a thorough survey of different possible meanings bells could have had, she found no single satisfactory answer.[581] The fact that many of the bells were indeed functional with a moving clapper, suggest that the meaning is probably connected with the sound they gave. That some bells from the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos are not functional does not need to refute this, as they could have been used as representations of the meaning of the original bells in a similar way as a miniature vase refers to the full-sized one. I will discuss the various different meanings of bells in section 5.5.2, as they are much more numerous at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos. But as a summary, Villing showed that they probably acted as signals either for guarding the city, or with some apotropaic function. It is possible that given the large amount of evidence for women worshippers at the sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos, the suggestion by Villing that they had to do with protecting children is also plausible for the one bronze bell (and two terracotta bells) found here.

Bronze objects do not alter the picture of the cult that has already emerged from the analysis of other material objects. It does seem to support the notion that certain types of dedications were limited to specific media, on the one hand; on the other, the bronzes strongly corroborate the presence of women among worshippers.

[581] Villing 2002, 275-295.

### 3.4.5. Other material evidence

Here are grouped the few objects in various materials that are not numerous enough to justify a separate section. Among these is an unspecified number of weapon dedications from the latest excavations, which have not yet been published properly.

Catling described dedications found in a pit to include "abundant iron, including many fragments of spits, spearheads, sword fragments, arrowheads, and at least two ploughshares."[582] It is difficult to comment on the objects without a proper publication, but they at least show that weapon dedications were made at the sanctuary, and it is not a question of just one type of weapon. However, the context of the finds in a single pit poses the possibility that these were a single dedication, downplaying the significance of the military aspect of the cult. We must wait for the proper contextual information and the dates for the objects to see if this was a ritual deposit as a result of initial dedication, or if this is a case of those in charge of the sanctuary occasionally clearing out dedications and depositing them in a pit. This is still a contrast to the sanctuary of Orthia, where no real weapons were found, despite a large number of other military-themed dedications. It is not possible to say if these were dedicated to Helen or Menelaos, but perhaps they were more likely meant for Menelaos – a military leader during the Trojan war and mentioned as following the Spartan army on campaign in the fragment of Simonides discussed at the beginning of this chapter. Overall, I support the interpretation advocated by Parker and Flower that Menelaos was worshipped as a hero with military significance.

There are several objects in glazed paste (one fragmented nude male figurine and scarabs) found with Laconian II (620-580 B.C.), and a head of an unidentifiable animal from the sixth century.[583] Beads and whorls were also found in different materials, but no information was given of their contexts.[584] In iron there was a Laconian II pin.[585] In addition there were items of jewellery in silver and gold, all found with Laconian II.[586] Datable finds are mainly from the Laconian II period and give further evidence for the group of jewellery and ornaments found at the site. The whorls add to the range of dedications suggesting that

[582] Catling 1976-1977, 38. These were not illustrated in the report and no numbers or dates were given.
[583] Wace 1908/1909, 141.
[584] Wace 1908/1909, 141-142.
[585] Wace 1908/1909, 146.
[586] Wace 1908/1909, 142.

women frequented the sanctuary, while the weapons add to the range of military dedications found at the sanctuary.

### 3.5. Discussion: the nature of the cult

While the range and quantity of dedications found at the Menelaion are much smaller than at the sanctuary of Orthia, we can see that there is nevertheless a wide range of different types of objects, referring to different aspects of divine power invoked here.

While it is not possible to say for certain, which dedications were meant for which of the two recipients they were intended for, it is plausible that Helen was invoked here as a goddess related to girls and women, as attested by the dedications referring to textile production and marriage rituals. The lead models of textiles are complemented by the terracotta loom weights and whorls showing the importance of textiles in the cult. In addition, the literary evidence showed a connection with marriage rituals for Helen in general, although the evidence for the nature of the cult at Therapne was very slight. The early winged female lead figurines with animals suggest that Helen was early on associated with having control over the natural world as a Mistress of Animals, but this type does not continue in the later periods, suggesting that this role may have faded away.

The weapons were more likely to have been given to Menelaos than Helen, suggesting he was invoked as a military divinity. Perhaps the dedications referring to the Dioscuri were meant to emphasise Menelaos' position as the king of Sparta. But there are also a wide range of dedications for which it is more difficult to assign a recipient. The large number of warrior figurines in lead emphasise the military aspect of the cult practised here, but it is not certain whether these dedications were addressed to Menelaos, Helen or both of them. Among the literary sources Menelaos is only briefly mentioned as a cult recipient in Sparta, but the dedications found at the sanctuary show he was worshipped alongside Helen.

Some smaller quantities of objects also show ties with the dedications found in the sanctuaries of Orthia and Athena Chalkioikos. The horse riders are found at both the sanctuary of Orthia and the Menelaion, while bells and Panathenaic amphorae are found at the Menelaion and the sanctuary of Athena. On a superficial level these show that the dedicatory material seems to come from the same source, and worshippers in Sparta could dedicate them to different sanctuaries of their choosing. However, there are differences in

the particular composition of the assemblages between the sanctuaries as well, which cannot be explained by the proximity of the sanctuaries and their meaning must be sought elsewhere. The bells found in large quantities at the sanctuary of Athena, which will be discussed below, refer most likely to apotropaic functions or to the protection of the city. Their very small quantity found here vs. the large quantity on the acropolis show that the protective aspect of Helen was more limited than that of Athena. On the other hand, the Panathenaic amphorae testify to the significance of the Menelaion for the display of athletic success, although for the Menelaion we do not know in which games they were won. But clearly the Menelaion was not an insignificant and remote sanctuary, because these high status items were taken here instead of just to the acropolis in the centre of the city. The similarities between the Menelaion and the sanctuary of Orthia are visible among the lead dedications, and the horse riders. No horse riders, male nor female, were found on the acropolis sanctuary of Athena. And in her study on the side-saddle riders Voyatzis notes that only one was dedicated to Athena: the Athena Alea at Tegea, another sanctuary where a local goddess was later associated with Athena.[587] Athena Alea's connection with fertility and nature is familiar to us for the Menelaion and the sanctuary of Orthia, and the lack of the type found on the acropolis shows how these aspects were distributed among the female divinities in Sparta.

While previous research on Spartan religion has sometimes highlighted the martial nature of all local cults, at the Menelaion we see, for example, a much narrower range of different military dedications than that at the Orthia sanctuary; the assemblage shows that the cult at the Menelaion was not overwhelmingly a military cult. The lead figurines and real weapons show that there was a military connection, but they are much fewer in number than other types of dedications. The literary sources do not describe any rituals related to war at the sanctuary. While the absence of evidence does not prove the absence of such rituals, the archaeological evidence shows that this location was much less concerned with warfare and warriors than other Spartan sanctuaries. The dedications do not support the idea that Spartan religion and Spartan society were militaristic across the board, and therefore this adds to the evidence that Spartan deities and cults addressed a much wider range of concerns with warfare being just one among the many.

[587] Voyatzis 1992, 275.

## 4. The sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai

### 4.1. Topography

The sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai, the Amyklaion, is located ca 5km south-east of central Sparta, on a hill which provides visibility over the Eurotas valley in all directions (see fig. 1).

Polybius (5.19.2), in describing the location of Amyklai, wrote that it is located 20 *stades* from Lakedaimon, and the sanctuary is located in the part of the *polis* that overlooks the sea.[588] Based on this description, some scholars have placed the centre of Amyklai somewhere north of the sanctuary, so that the site was in the southernmost part of Amyklai, overlooking the sea.[589] However, it is not clear if Polybius meant that the Amyklaion is in a part of the city of Amyklai that overlooks the sea, or if the 'city' refers to Sparta, and that *Amyklai* is overlooking the sea, i.e. south of Sparta (today, the sanctuary is ca 35km north-west from the coast).[590] The identification and excavation of the sanctuary of Alexandra/Cassandra, which was described by Pausanias as located in Amyklai (3.19.6), has confirmed the extent of the area of Amyklai to at least ca 1km south-east of the Amyklaion.[591]

Finally, in Athenaios (4.173f) there is a mention of the Hyakinthian Road, a road connecting Sparta with Amyklai, which was possibly associated with the Hyakinthia-festival celebrated at the Amyklaion (discussed below).

### 4.2. The site and history of excavations

The main architectural remains at the sanctuary are from the Archaic period, and show a partially preserved peribolos wall, the foundations for the throne of Apollo (fig. 12), a stoa, and the remains of a semi-circular altar. Around the time of the early excavations at the site (described below) some of the remains were moved and reused elsewhere: none of the remains of the round altar excavated by Tsountas were preserved when Furtwängler started

[588] The exact wording in Polybius is: αἱ δ᾽ Ἀμύκλαι καλούμεναι τόπος ἐστὶ τῆς Λακωνικῆς χώρας καλλιδενδρότατος καὶ καλλικαρπότατος, ἀπέχει δὲ τῆς Λακεδαίμονος ὡς εἴκοσι σταδίους. [3] ὑπάρχει δὲ καὶ τέμενος Ἀπόλλωνος ἐν αὐτῷ σχεδὸν ἐπιφανέστατον τῶν κατὰ τὴν Λακωνικὴν ἱερῶν. κεῖται δὲ τῆς πόλεως ἐν τοῖς πρὸς θάλατταν κεκλιμένοις μέρεσι.

[589] See Salapata 2014, 15-16 for the summary of the suggestions with references.

[590] Fiechter argued that the city refers to Sparta, while Stiglitz (1953, 73) argued that it meant the city of Amyklai.

[591] Salapata 2014, chapter 1.

his work at the site but were reportedly taken away and used for walls marking nearby fields. In addition, the peribolos wall had also been robbed in part when Furtwängler visited the site.[592] The most recent research project has mapped out spolia from the site in the surrounding churches of Prophet Elijah, St Theodore, and St Nicholas in modern Amykles, and the church of the Virgin in the community of Agios Ioannis in Sparta.[593]

The peribolos wall has been uncovered and traced along the eastern half of the hill. The main purpose of it seems to have been to serve as a retaining wall for the soil within the sanctuary, so that the larger structures could be built on top of it.[594] One entrance, possibly in the form of a roofed propylon building was located in the northern part of the sanctuary.[595] Another one, diametrically opposite in the south has recently been discovered.[596] The peribolos was built some time during the Archaic period; the excavations around the wall in 2016 uncovered Geometric period pottery, which gives it the terminus post quem.[597]

A modern church stood on the site when the excavations began. The church was eventually torn down, and the foundations visible underneath it exposed.[598] After Fiechter's excavations, another one was built in a different part of the sanctuary hill and this church is now stands at the site.[599] The rectangular structure uncovered under the old church was identified as the remaining foundations for the throne of Apollo known from literary sources. Five courses of carved stone (poros and marble) were preserved of the structure.[600] Pausanias (3.19.1-3) gives a detailed description of the mythological scenes decorating the throne, but he is less specific on its construction:

> "The part of the throne where the god would sit is not continuous; there are several seats, and by the side of each seat is left a wide empty space, the middle, whereon

[592] Fiechter 1918, 109.
[593] Preliminary report 2005, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=795 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[594] Preliminary report 2006, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=801 retrieved 4.4.2019
[595] Preliminary report 2013, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=825 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[596] Preliminary report 2017 http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3270 retrieved 4.4.2019. The associated pottery is dated from the Geometric to the Archaic periods.
[597] Preliminary report 2016, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3143 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[598] Fiechter 1918, 133-136.
[599] The builders reused some of the ancient architectural blocks, and these have been mapped out by the current project (Preliminary report 2006, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=801 retrieved 4.4.2019)
[600] Fiechter 1918, 134.

> the image stands, being the widest of them. I know of nobody who has measured the height of the image, but at a guess one would estimate it to be as much as thirty cubits. It is not the work of Bathycles, being old and uncouth; for though it has face, feet, and hands, the rest resembles a bronze pillar. On its head it has a helmet, in its hands a spear and a bow. The pedestal of the statue is fashioned into the shape of an altar; and they say that Hyacinthus is buried in it, and at the Hyacinthia, before the sacrifice to Apollo, they devote offerings to Hyacinthus as to a hero into this altar through a bronze door, which is on the left of the altar." (transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb edition)

Earlier, he ascribes the design of the altar to Bathycles of Magnesia (3.18.9). This description was originally the only source for the reconstructions of the monument, until the excavations provided some additional evidence for its design.[601] The throne is dated to the sixth century B.C., while the statue is considered to be an earlier work, from the end of the seventh century B.C.[602] The statue was most probably depicted on Imperial Roman period coins (fig. 21), showing a statue with a pillar-like body, holding a bow in one hand and a spear in the other, and wearing a helmet.[603]

In the late sixth century B.C. a rectangular, roofed building identified as a stoa was built in the south part of the hill, consisting of several phases of construction (dating from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period). In front of this building, on its south side, a layer of dark soil with a range of finds from miniature vases to iron spits and a part of a bronze helmet suggests cultic or ceremonial use for the area. During the Late Roman period the

[601] See Faustoferri 1996 for a summary of previous reconstructions until then. Fiechter (1918) and Buschor (1927) proposed the first reconstructions using the excavated remains. Martin (1976) based his reconstruction on Fiechter's. The recent excavations and the new material uncovered have only produced short notes on these reconstructions: Delivorrias 2009; Korres 2012; Bilis & Magnisali 2012. The latter challenges some of the previous assumptions on the size based on very recently excavated material.

[602] Throne: Buschor (Bushor & Von Massow 1927, ) argued for a late sixth century B.C. date, while Faustoferri prefers mid-sixth century (Faustoferri 1996, 297-358). Statue: Ridgeway 1977; Bushor & Von Massow 1927, 15-16; Romano 1980, 99-109.

[603] Coins: Grunauer von Hoerschelmann 1978, 99, pl 32; Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner 1964, 59. The latter identified a Hellenistic coin from the reign of Cleomenes III also as the Apollo at Amyklai, but it is more likely the image of Orthia (see above section 2.4.) Other sources mention the statue as well in less detail: Hdt. 1.69; Ath. *Deipn*. 6.232a. See also a stone stele possibly depicting the statue in 4.4.4.

building was used as a workshop area, as attested by the finds of iron tools, and lumps of clay and glass.[604]

The circular altar was first published by Tsountas, and later described with a scale by Fiechter who noted that its diameter was ca. 10m.[605] Tsountas considered it to be the foundations of the throne of Apollo, but Furtwängler argued that it was instead a round altar, and that the throne was located under the Hagia Kyriaki church on the highest point of the hill.[606] Black soil with bones and miniature pottery found next to the circular structure support the interpretation of it as an altar. The recent excavations have enabled the reconstruction of it on and a reconstruction now stands at the site.[607]

Some time during the Roman/Late Antique period a series of new structures were created, including a square cistern, a roofed building and an open space.[608] A building dated to the sixth century A.D. shows the continued use of the space, although its particular function remains unclear.[609]

The site has been in use since the Mycenaean period, but so far no structures have been found from this early period of use.[610] A retaining wall of the Geometric period was uncovered in 2007.[611] The finds from the site now cover the period from the Early Helladic period to Byzantine times, with finds relating to both cultic and domestic activities, testifying to the long period of use for the hill.[612]

Amyklai and the Amyklaion were frequently mentioned by 18th and 19th century travellers, but archaeological research started at Amyklaion in the late 19th century when Tsountas exposed the retaining wall of the sanctuary and excavated on the hilltop finding

[604] Preliminary report 2017 http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3270; Preliminary report 2018 http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3357 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[605] Tsountas 1893, 1, 15; Fiechter 1918, 132, abb, 18.
[606] Tsountas 1893, 15-16; Furtwängler 1983, 693; Fiechter 1918, 122, 133-136.
[607] Tsountas 1893, 15-16. A recent reconstruction can be found in Bilis & Magnisali 2012, 128, fig 3.
[608] Preliminary report 2016, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3143 retrieved 4.4.2019. No firm dates were given.
[609] Preliminary report 2017, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3270 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[610] The Mycenaean period at Amyklai has been discussed by Demakopoulou 1982. During the new excavations, the earliest find, an intact vase, has been dated to the Early Helladic period (Preliminary report 2009, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=812 retrieved 4.4.2019).
[611] Preliminary report 2007, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=805 retrieved 4.2.2019.
[612] Preliminary report 2015, retrieved 4.4.2019.

the foundations of a round altar.[613] This was followed by a short season led by Furtwängler in 1904, who exposed remains of the throne of Apollo below a modern church as well as more of the peribolos wall.[614] A further campaign led by Von Massow and Buschor took place in 1925.[615]

Fieldwork resumed in 2005 within the framework of the Amykles Research Project led by Angelos Delivorras and Stavros Vlizos, but only preliminary reports have been published, along with one volume of short articles on the work conducted in 2005-2010.[616] No finds from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period from these excavations have been published as of yet.[617]

### 4.3. Nature of cult: literary evidence

#### 4.3.1. Deities worshipped

There is a range of both literary and epigraphic evidence identifying the deities worshipped at the sanctuary. Polybius was already mentioned above, and he describes the *temenos* of Apollo at Amyklai (5.19.2), while Thucydides mentions a stele to be set up next to the Apollo at Amyklai (Thuc. 5.23.5), and he probably meant the statue of the god in the sanctuary. The statue was described by Pausanias, who also notes that it was placed on an altar-shaped pedestal, and that Hyakinthos was buried within the structure and received sacrifice through a bronze door (Paus. 3.19.3).[618] On the relief decoration Pausanias describes Hyakinthos, and his sister Polyboia, being carried to heaven by a group of deities (3.19.4), suggesting his apotheosis after his death.

[613] Tsountas 1893. And overview of early traveller accounts of the area has recently been written by Matalas (2012).
[614] Fiechter 1918, 110, 133-136.
[615] Von Massow & Buschor 1927.
[616] Preliminary reports are available on the project's website http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=172. Retrieved 22.9.2016. See also a short article on the beginning of the project in Vlizos 2009. The short articles on work between 2005 and 2010 were published in vol 11-12 of *Μουσείο Μπενάκη*.

[618] For a range of reconstructions of the throne, see Faustoferri 1996.

It is in the Roman period when the god is possibly associated with the epithet *tetracheir* (four-armed), although no direct evidence from the excavations at the sanctuary has been found.[619]

The connection between Apollo and Hyakinthos is first described in Euripides' *Helen*, where he writes that Apollo accidentally killed Hyakinthos when throwing a discus. The god then ordered the Laconians to sacrifice to the hero (Eur. *Hel*. 1468-1475). This aition is also found in Athenaios' *Deipnosophistai* (Ath. 4.139d-f, quoting Polycrates' *History of Sparta*) where he describes a festival called Hyakinthia, where due to the grief felt for Hyakinthos no garlands were worn. I will come back to the evidence for the festival shortly. Apollodorus (Apoll. 1.3.3 and 3.10.3) adds that the god and hero were lovers, and also that Hyakinthos was a Spartan man living in Athens, where he had four daughters (3.15.8).[620] The connection between Apollo and Hyakinthos has been seen both as a relationship between the young Hyakinthos and the youthful Apollo, but also as a relationship of a homosexual pair, with Apollo being the older *erastes* vis-à-vis the young men of Sparta moving from the status of *eromenoi* to *erastai* at the end of their initiation, for which the myth of Hyakinthos functioned as the *aition*.[621] I will return to the subject of initiation and the festival celebrated at the sanctuary a little later. The connection between the flower and Hyakinthos is explained by Palaiphatos (*On Unbelievable Tales*, 46), who specifies that the flower sprung up from the blood of Hyakinthos.[622]

Thus, we can see that the literary sources describe two connected cult recipients at Amyklai. Some fragmentary dedicatory inscriptions on stone found already by Fiechter confirm the identification of the site, showing that dedications were made to Apollo.[623] The

[619] An inscription mentions a priest of Apollo Tetracheir, but it was not found in the sanctuary (IG V 1 259). Kennell places Apollo Tetracheir in the town of Apollo, not the sanctuary (1995, 163), while Petropoulou wants to connect it with the cult at the Amyklaion (2012, 156).
[620] Apollodorus lists the daughters as Antheis, Aigleis, Lytaia and Ortheia, and tells that they were sacrificed at the altar of the cyclops Geraistos in accordance to an oracle during a time of pestilence and famine (3.15.8). See Pettersson 1994, 35, for discussion and references for the Athenian Hyakinthos and his similarities with Erechtheus.
[621] Sergent 1984, 112. Sergent also links it to the initiation of girls, by juxtaposing Apollo's sister Artemis with Hyakinthos' sister Polyboia.
[622] See also Ovid. *Met*. 10.210-215; Lucian, *Dial*. D 14.2.
[623] Fiechter 1918, 223, nos. 11-12.

earliest of these date to the end of the seventh century B.C., when a bronze object was dedicated to Apollo by someone called Dorkonida.[624]

Who was Hyakinthos then? The name is considered to be pre-Greek in origin because of the suffix -nthos in his name.[625] Hyakinthos has been identified as the first deity to be worshipped at the site, as a vegetation god, only to be later replaced by the Dorian Apollo (a process which is recounted in the myth of Hyakinthos' death by Apollo).[626] The Dorian connection to the festival of Hyakinthos (see below) is further emphasized by the spread of the month Hyakinthios in Dorian areas.[627] Richer is rightly critical of the diachronic interpretation of the cult and myth in this way: the Spartans of the Archaic and Classical periods would not necessarily have seen the myth in this perspective of replacement. Instead, he emphasizes the myth of a youth killed by Apollo, with commemorative sacrifices established afterwards.[628] In his description of the throne (3.19.4.), Pausanias describes a group of statues on it, specifying that Hyakinthos is depicted bearded (γένεια), but elsewhere he is depicted as youthful (ὡραῖον).[629] This has led to discussion on whether the beard means he is a mature man, or if the beard is the youth's first beard, or if, as Pettersson suggests, these were two separate identities for Hyakinthos.[630] We will see below that both Spartan youths and girls participated in the festival at the sanctuary, so there is a connection with adolescence, thus making the beard less likely a signifier of old age. The presence of a tomb for Hyakinthos places him in the hero-category, but the cult was aimed as much to Apollo (as testified by the dedicatory inscriptions) as it was connected with the untimely death of a mythical hero.

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[624] *SEG* 11 (1954) 129, no 689; Jeffery 1990, 198. No. 5.
[625] Brelich argues that this means the cult of the later period was a continuation of a Mycenaean period cult (Brelich 1969, 177-179). For the opposing view: Pettersson (1992, 99, 126) who sees the later cult associated with the establishment of the polis.
[626] Nilsson 1906, 129-140; Burkert 1985, 19; Vlizos 2009, 22.
[627] Burkert 1985, p 19, n 29. Burkert lists: Sparta, Gytheion, (Megara-) Byzantium, Crete, Thera, Rhodes, Kalymnos, Cnidos, and Kos. Richer (2012, 499, n3) adds evidence of a tribe name Hyakinthis at Tenos. Polybius writes that there was a tomb at Tarentum that some called the tomb or Hyakinthos, and some the tomb of Apollo (Polyb. 8.30).
[628] Richer 2012, 346.
[629] "On the altar are also Demeter, the Maid, Pluto, next to them Fates and Seasons, and with them Aphrodite, Athena and Artemis. They are carrying to heaven Hyacinthus and Polyboea, the sister, they say, of Hyacinthus, who died a maid. Now this statue of Hyacinthus represents him as bearded, but Nicias, son of Nicomedes, has painted him in the very prime of youthful beauty, hinting at the love of Apollo for Hyacinthus of which legend tells." (transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb edition).
[630] For a summary and references, see Calame 1977, 180-181; Pettersson 1994, 29-36.

Later sources describe Hyakinthos as the son of Amyklas, who was the son of Lakedaimon and Sparte (Apollod. 3.10.3; Paus. 3.1.3), or the son of Oibalus, the father of Tyndareus (Philostr., *Imag*. 14.2). These all tie Hyakinthos to early history of Sparta, but it is unclear if the traditions are a later invention.

### 4.3.2. Rituals: Hyakinthia

A number of ancient authors describe activities taking place at the sanctuary.[631] While some have argued that the basic structure of the cult during the Hyakinthia (built around two diametrically opposed parts) remained the same from its inception to the Roman period, it is worthwhile to consider the sources chronologically before moving on to the archaeological evidence from the sanctuary.[632] I will then discuss the participation in and the wider nature of the festival and how this has been viewed in scholarship. In the section that follows, I will especially focus on how the sanctuary has been placed in the argument for a military nature of Spartan religion.

The earliest source for the festival is Herodotus, who writes that the Lacedaemonians were celebrating the Hyakinthia when the Athenian messengers arrived to plea for assistance against the Persians (Hdt. 9.7; 9.11).[633]

Slightly later, Thucydides, when describing the alliance between Sparta and Athens, mentions that the Athenians shall go to Sparta to renew their oaths during the Hyakinthia, and the Spartans to Athens during the Dionysia (Thuc. 5.23.4). In addition, a stele was to be set up (presumably recording the alliance) at the temple of Apollo at Amyklai and the temple of Athena in the Athenian Acropolis (Thuc. 5.23.5).[634] Does this mean that the Hyakinthia and the Amyklaion had a predominantly civic character? Richer argues that the choice of Apollo instead of a perhaps more obvious Athena Poliouchos (discussed in chapter

[631] The sanctuary itself is mentioned by a couple more sources than described here, but these contribute little to our understanding of the cult. Polybius describes the sanctuary as the most famous of Laconian sanctuaries (Polyb. 5.19.3), Aristophanes lists Apollo at Amyklai as recipient of sacrifice (Ar. *Lys*. 1299).

[632] Pettersson 1992, 9, and chapter 1. Criticism of this by Flower 2018, 438, who however, identifies persistent features throughout centuries.

[633] For discussion on this episode, see Richer 2004, 80-81; Richer 2012, 354-356.

[634] Following Hornblower's interpretation of the text (Hornblower 1996, 499). Steiner translates the passage as the stelae to be placed by the statues of the deities (Steiner 1994, 66), but perhaps here the important point is that the stelae are placed within a sanctuary, where they will be less likely to be meddled with.

5), was in part due to the role Apollo had in protecting the city, as testified by the placement of the two, armed statues of Apollo at Amyklai and at Thornax.[635] But this is not the only explanation for the choice of location. The choice of the Hyakinthia for the swearing of oaths may have been a result of wanting to have the two happen at the same time of the year, and the City Dionysia and the Hyakinthia did just that.[636] The Hyakinthia also gathered the whole (or at least a large part of the) population of the city, and thus the audience for the oaths would have been large.

Xenophon refers to the festival on two occasions. First in *Agesilaus*, he describes how after leading an expedition against the Argives, Agesilaos returned home for the Hyakinthia and sang the paean in honour of the god (Xen. *Ages*. 2.17). The passage is in parts identical to the corresponding part in *Hellenica*, which, however, lacks the mention of the festival (Xen. *Hell*. 4.4.19). Later on, Xenophon mentions that the Amyklaian troops in the Spartan army would always go back to Amyklai for the festival and to sing the paean, even when they were away on a campaign or for any other reason (Xen. *Hell*. 4.5.11). While the description of Agesilaus' return home for the festival serves perhaps to emphasize his piety, the testimony from Xenophon indicates a strong local importance of the festival, and especially for the Amyklaians.

The next source in chronological order, Euripides' *Helen* (1465-1470), has already been mentioned above. The part that concerns the festival describes dances and revels, and nightly feasting. The festival is described as the time when Helen returned:

> I think she will find the daughters
> of Leucippus by the river or before
> the temple of Pallas,
> as she arrives home at the time of the dances
> or revels of Hyacinth
> and their nightlong feasting
> (Eur. *Hel*. 1465-1470, transl. D. Kovacs, Loeb edition)

I will discuss below the participation of women in this festival. Here we may note that Euripides describes the dancing and night-time feasting as part of the celebration.

[635] Richer 2012, 364.
[636] Richer 2012, 376.

A scholiast on Pindar (Σ. Pind. *Isthm*. 7.18) preserves a fragment of Aristotle, which records a custom of displaying the breastplate of a military leader called Timomachos during the festival. He was supposedly leading a Theban group against the Amyklaians, aiding the Spartans who were at war with them. The display of a breastplate suggests commemoration of a military symmachia, hinting at the military role associated with the cult. No other reference to this display of armour is found among the other sources for the festival.

Strabo (6.3.2), quoting Antiochus, describes a plot by the *partheniai* taking place during the games of the Hyakinthia.[637] He mentions participation of citizens who were distinguished by their hairstyle. Pettersson quotes this passage as evidence for the civic character of the festival, in addition to the evidence from Thucydides and the placement of a stele recording the alliance with Athens.[638] However, as already mentioned, the placement of the stele here could have been influenced by the date of the festival. I will return to this topic later. There is also evidence for athletic games held at the Amyklaion, although it comes from the Roman period, when women are mentioned as organisers of the games (see below for women's role at the festival).

Athenaios' *Deipnosophistai* (Ath. 4.139d-f) is the most detailed description of the festival. Quoting Polycrates' *History of Sparta*, he says:

> "...the Spartans celebrate the Hyakinthia festival for three days, and because of the grief felt for Hyakinthos they neither wear garlands at their dinner parties nor serve bread, but instead offer sacrificial cakes and the goods that go with them. And they do not sing the paean to the god or do anything else of this sort, as they do at their other festivals, but eat in a very orderly fashion and then leave. On the middle day of the three there is an elaborate show and a large festival assembly that deserves mention. Boys play the lyre with their tunics pulled up high and sing accompanied by the pipe, running their picks over all the strings and singing to the god in anapaestic rhythm and a high pitch; and others pass through the theatre mounted on horses in trappings. Numerous choruses of young men come in and sing some of their local poems, and dancers mixed in with them move in the ancient style, accompanied by the pipe and the song. Some of the unmarried girls are carried in expensively

[637] Other evidence for games does not come from the sanctuary: an inscription referring to a victor in the games at Amyklai from the fourth century B.C. (*SEG* 1, 87).
[638] Pettersson 1992, 11.

> ornamented carriages fitted with wickerwork, while others process on two-horse racing chariots; and the whole city is full of movement and the pleasure of the festival. They also sacrifice a large number of animals on this day, and the citizens offer dinner to everyone they know, as well as to their own slaves. No one misses the celebration, and the city empties out to attend the show." (Ath. 4.139d-f, transl. S. D. Olson, Loeb edition)

We can see from this passage that the festival at this point had two separate phases; the first one being of a more solemn type, when the death of Hyakinthos is mourned and the activities are not of the kind the Spartans do at other festivals. The prohibition on singing the paean is an interesting aspect, which will be discussed later in the context of a later source, Macrobius. After dining, the participants go home. In the middle of the second day of the three-day festival the tone seems to shift to a more elaborate celebration with singing, playing music, dancing, and dining. Boys (παῖδες), young men (νεανίσκοι), unmarried women (παρθένοι), citizens (ὀι πολῖται), and those they know (πάντασ τοὺς γνωρίσμους), and their slaves (τοὺς δούλους) all take part in various roles. Only one group of women is mentioned, the παρθένοι, and it is unclear if married, or older women could also take part. Athenaios also quotes Demetrius of Scepsis mentioning the Hyakinthian Road with shrines founded by those who make the barley cakes and who mix the wine for the common messes (Ath. 4.173f).

Pausanias' relatively long passage on the sanctuary offers further, but late, evidence on the activities taking place within the sanctuary. He records a tradition according to which Hyakinthos was buried within the altar-shaped pedestal of the cult statue of Apollo. He received sacrifice through a bronze door before the sacrifice to Apollo (Paus. 3.19.3). Apparently it was possible to go under the throne (Paus 5.11.4). Slightly earlier in his narrative, he mentioned the *chiton* woven by Spartan women for Apollo at Amyklai, in a place called Chiton (Paus. 3.16.2). This has been connected with the Hyakinthia by several scholars.[639] Vlizos (2009) sees the making of the *chiton* in Sparta, and the chariot procession from Sparta, as a way for Sparta to emphasize the Spartan appropriation of Amyklai.[640] The display of Timomachos' breastplate said to be associated with the conquest of Amyklai adds

[639] Edmonson 1959, 164; Calame 1977, 310.
[640] Vlizos 2009, 22. Kennell argues that the procession merely means that the sanctuary was under Spartan control, and says nothing of political unity (Kennell 1995, 166).

further evidence to this suggestion. However, we should keep in mind that there is a long period of time between the different sources and combining them in order to reconstruct a 'fuller' picture of the festival should be approached with caution.

Finally, Macrobius makes a reference to the festival, saying that the participants wear ivy garlands during the Hyakinthia (1.18.2). This is contradictory to the evidence from Polycrates, who specifically notes that no garlands were worn. Pettersson explains this by the structure of the festival, which emphasized the mourning of Hyakinthos' death on the first day, with prohibitions of wreaths and singing the paean, only to be followed by a second part when these prohibitions were lifted.[641] This is indeed the most likely explanation for the contradictory evidence.

What emerges from this short survey of the literary evidence is a description of activities that were customary mostly between roughly the end of the fifth to the fourth century B.C., when we consider the evidence falling in the chronological scope of this study. The question of the date of Polycrates' testimony in Athenaios is difficult to answer: the quote in Athenaios is the only remaining description of his work. Jacoby proposes that he may have been of Laconian origin, and Pettersson suggests that he may have been an eyewitness to the festival. But when? Pettersson deduces that he is not later than the first century B.C. because Didymos of Alexandria, who is recorded quoting him in Athenaios is dated to the first century B.C.[642] Thus at best we can hope that his testimony falls within the chronological scope of the present work, that is, in the Hellenistic period.

As we saw earlier with the case of the whipping ritual at the altar in the sanctuary of Orthia, rituals could change in nature and details as time went on. While Pausanias does provide interesting details about the particular role of Hyakinthos as a recipient of sacrifice, we have no earlier evidence for this. Therefore, it is possible that this was added later on to the rituals relating to the festival. The majority of the earlier sources do not give details regarding the particular rituals performed during the festival. We hear that the festival had an important role, especially to the Amyklaians, allowing them to return home from a military campaign in order to celebrate it. The Classical sources also mention singing as part of the festival, and the musical aspect of the celebration is also found in Polycrates'

[641] Pettersson 1992, 17-28.
[642] FGrHist 588 F1; Pettersson 1992, 10, n.10.

description of it, although in more detail. In his time, the festival had a distinct order of activities and rituals, with opposing ideas of death and renewal, and a wide participation from the whole city. During the Roman period, Pausanias pays special attention on the throne of Apollo, and archaeological evidence in part supports his description (see above section 4.2).

***Participants***

The significance of the sanctuary to Sparta is evident from the literary sources, and there is more evidence for the Hyakinthia being all-inclusive and open to Laconians than for it being a local festival mainly for Amyklaians, as suggested by Cartledge.[643] Citizens were present in the festival in Antiochus' account, the alliance between Athens and Sparta was to be finalized by stelae placed on the Acropolis in Athens and the Amyklaian sanctuary according to Thucydides, and at least some Amyklaian warriors left military expeditions in order to participate in the festival, according to Xenophon. The setting up of Timomachos' armour at the sanctuary commemorated Sparta's conquest of Amyklai, and if we can trust this account from the scholion, it served to emphasize Amyklai's position as a conquered part of Sparta. However, why would the Spartans wish to emphasize this subjection during a festival, which seemed to have been attended not only by the citizens, but members of the broader community? As Polykrates records, even slaves and acquaintances took part in the festival, which emphasizes the inclusive, communal role of the festival on the second day. It seems that the festival, on some level, may have functioned as a celebration of Spartan identity as a process of constructing Spartan community through integration of parts, such as the incorporation of Amyklai into Sparta. This is also supported by the participation of young men and women (παῖδες, νεανίσκοι, παρθένοι), which points towards the significance of the festival to different age groups as well. I will return to this below.

The participation of women is attested in various sources. Pettersson sees Euripides' description of Helen's return as evidence for women's participation in the festival, but the text only gives the festival as the time for Helen's return and makes no comment on

[643] Cartledge 2002, 70. Critisized by Pettersson (Pettersson 1992, 19, n. 84). N.B. Cartledge 2002 is a second edition of the original 1979 edition Pettersson criticises.

whether she was going to/allowed to participate.[644] Further evidence for women's participation can be found among the archaeological and epigraphic material. A Roman period inscription describing a female leader for a competition during the Hyakinthia (*IG* V 1, 586, 587). In addition, a graffito on a third century B.C. roof tile gives a list of women's names, which has been connected with the festival by Edmonson.[645] A stone relief found at the sanctuary depicting women in a scene of leading a sacrificial animal to the altar (discussed below) has been used as further evidence for women's participation in the festival.[646] In addition, we have Pausanias' description of a *chiton* being woven by women for Apollo. Thus, it seems that younger, unmarried women participated in the part of the festival where they arrived on chariots, while presumably older women were given the responsibility of leading in a competition during the festival. We should be careful with the dates of the evidence, however, as they are mostly late in date. Therefore, archaeological evidence becomes even more important for the earlier periods of cultic activity at the site.

***The nature of the festival***

As mentioned earlier (section 4.3.1), previous scholars have seen Hyakinthos as a vegetation god, who is subsequently killed by Apollo, symbolising the supposed Dorian invasion and replacement of old pre-Doric cults by new ones. The emphasis in the festival on the death and mourning of Hyakinthos, followed by a less sombre celebration, led early scholars such as Nilsson and Rohde to consider it a chthonic festival followed by the invocation of the forces of vegetation.[647] On the other hand, the structure of the festival, with periods of mourning and celebration has led other scholars to see it as related to initiation and renewal.[648] Among them, Calame emphasizes how the ritual seems to be a re-enactment of the myth: first the death of Hyakinthos, followed by a period of mourning, and then his ascension to the status of hero, followed by celebration.[649] The carriages bringing the young boys and girls to the festival, which was attended by everyone, led Calame also to consider

[644] Pettersson 1992, 12.
[645] Edmonson 1959, 162-164.
[646] Pettersson 1992, 12, n. 21.
[647] Nilsson. *Gr. Feste*, p. 140; Mellink 1943, 161.
[648] E.g. Brelich 143-145; Sergent 1984, 114-116; Pettersson 1992, 29; Flower 2018, 438.
[649] Calame 2001, 181.

it as a good candidate for presentation of new boy and girl initiates.[650] It is this aspect of initiation, and the participation of girls and boys, that has taken the centre stage in the interpretations of the nature of the festival and the cult.

Flower highlights how difficult it is to say to what extent the Hellenistic period source would reflect earlier periods but identifies three themes that "perhaps persisted" over centuries: renewal, initiation, and role reversal.[651] Why those themes in particular would have persisted, and which ones did not, remains unclear in his article. I discussed the problems of using the initiation-interpretation for festivals in the Introduction and there is no need to repeat the argument here. The sources do not describe any change in the status of the youths, or even their future role in society. Just because youths are present, it does not mean that they were about to be initiated. On the other hand, the extensive participation of the Spartan community, and the arrival of the girls and boys does suggest the festival had to do with collective identity, and the role of the young in society. Perhaps Calame's suggestion that the carriages displayed the children about to begin their initiation into society is close to reality, but with a caveat that there is no evidence for initiation rituals for these children at this festival, nor that the festival would have culminated in their admission into a new identity afterwards.

What else could the festival have been about? Calame also draws a parallel to the Pyanopsia festival at Athens. Both festivals appear to have similar foodstuffs, and in the context of a festival of Apollo, Calame sees this as more than just a coincidence. The Pyanopsia foods symbolized the *panspermia* at the end of the harvest season, and the Hyakinthia could similarly have been a harvest festival. He also finds another similarity between the festivals: the Athenian festival was linked to the myth of Theseus' return from Crete with his (young) companions. Therefore, there is also an element of presentation of adolescents to the townspeople and moving from death to renewed life.[652]

Flower also highlighted the reference in Xenophon (*Ages*. 8.7.; also Plut. *Ages*. 19.5) to the carriages bringing the girls to the festival. According to him, Agesilaos made sure the carriage carrying his daughter was of a plain type, in contrast to the others decorated with griffins and goat-stags. This suggests the carriages were used by the elite as markers of

[650] Calame 2001, 182.
[651] Flower 2018, 438.
[652] Calame 2001, 183-184.

wealth and high social status.[653] The festival, attended by the whole, or most of the population, could therefore function also to display and enforce the social stratification of Sparta.

Some scholars have pointed out the Dionysiac aspect of the festival as well. Euripides refers to choruses and dances of the Hyakinthia (χοροῖς ἢ κώμοις Ὑακίνθου, *Hel.* 1468-1469). Calame saw Bacchic connotations in the reference, whereas Richer adds, from mostly Roman sources, that Dionysos was depicted on the throne of Apollo (Paus. 3.19.3), and that there was a sanctuary of Dionysos nearby in Amyklai. In addition, Macrobius' reference to wreaths suggests to Richer that the cult had a Dionysiac aspect.[654]

Finally, there were some, mostly late, sources for games being held at the sanctuary, or in connection with the festival Hyakinthia. Kennell is doubtful of the existence of games during the Archaic period, as described by Polykrates, but considers it likely that during the Classical period the idea that there were games at the Hyakinthia was not thought to be a novelty.[655] He suggests the games could have been associated with decorating the carriages, and perhaps in the Roman period they took the form of athletic or equestrian competition.[656] The discus found at the sanctuary by Tsountas may have been a dedication made after such games, but unfortunately there is no date for it.[657] However, since the discus plays a central role in the myth of Apollo killing Hyakinthos, it is equally possible it was not evidence for games held during the festival, but a reference to the discus throw that led to the establishment of the festival.

It is clear from the literary evidence that the celebration of the festival was strongly related to the story of death and renewal. Whether it was an initiation-festival as well, or instead, is less clear. The evidence does not in my opinion place special focus on the changing status of the young boys and girls. Instead there is an emphasis on the wide participation of the population, of a festival concerning the commemoration of the death and life of Hyakinthos. It seems to me to have a more civic character, and the theme of renewal could well have made it about the harvest season and the fertility of the earth. But could it have had a military character as well? I will explore this subject next.

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[653] Flower 2018, 439.
[654] For full discussion, Richer 2012, 366-370 (also Richer 2004, 84-85).
[655] Kennell 1995, 65.
[656] Kennell 2018, 655.
[657] Tsountas 1892, 13. Kennell 1995, 65, considers it a victory dedication made after the games.

### 4.3.3. Military aspect of cult?

I have already mentioned Flower's argument on the armed statues of deities in Sparta being one of the key symbols for the Spartan ethos (see p. 17). I have discussed the archaeological evidence for the cult image above in section 4.3.1. In addition, Pausanias describes the statue of Apollo at Amyklai as carrying a spear and a bow, as well as wearing a helmet (3.19.1-2).[658] Therefore this statue has become part of Flower's argument for the warlike nature of Spartan religion.[659] There was another statue of Apollo at Thornax (on a hill north of Sparta) according to Pausanias (3.10.8), and Flower sees these two as providing protection for the city between them.[660] Pausanias describes how it was made to look like the statue at Amyklai, and refers to a story known from Herodotus (1.69) where the Lydian king Croesus gave Spartans gold in order to adorn the Thornax statue. Pausanias gives further details on the outcome of this episode and relates that instead the Spartans used this gold for the statue at Amyklai because it was considered more notable (3.10.8). Richer describes the duplication as one of the distinctive features in Spartan religion and adds that it could be used to reinforce the divine power of the divinity.[661] However, the research by Salapata and Hadzisteliou-Price, which Richer sites, discusses double or triple representations on single objects, not several representations in different parts of the *polis* territory. The only connection between these two statues in particular comes from the story in Herodotus, and there were other statues of Apollo in Sparta as well.[662] Thus, the argument that these two armed statues in particular protected the area between them is not on a solid ground. Sparta was populated by a wide range of divine images, both armed and unarmed, many considered to offer their protection to the city or its population in one way or another. Therefore, on their own, these two armed statues in two different parts of Sparta cannot be used to argue that the Spartan religion was dominated by military concerns.

Recently, Petropoulou connected the sacrifice of goats (and no other animals) to Apollo at Amyklai with the annual sacrifice of 500 goats at Marathon to Artemis Agrotera

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[658] Other sources mention the statue as well in less detail: Hdt. 1.69; Ath. *Deipn*. 6.232a.
[659] Flower 2009, 431, 433.
[660] Flower 2009, 431.
[661] Richer 2012, 230. Richer quotes the work of Salapata (2009) and Hadzisteliou-Price (1971).
[662] While not exhaustive, Pausanias' list of statues of Apollo in and around Sparta is indicative of the problem in Flower's argument singling out these two statues: 3.10.8; 3.11.9; 3.12.8; 3.23.2-3; 3.24.1; 3.25.3; 3.25.10.

following the success in the famous battle. In her view, this connection in the choice of sacrificial animal suggests a military nature to the sacrifices at Amyklai, and she also points out the armed statue of Apollo at the sanctuary here.[663] However, goats are not universally connected with military sacrifices, and there is no other supporting evidence for a connection between Artemis Agrotera, Marathon, and Amyklai.[664]

What has not been properly discussed yet is the display of the cuirass supposedly dated to the period of Spartan conquest of Amyklai (Σ. Pind. *Isthm*. 7.18; Frag 532 Rose). No other source describes it and therefore it is not clear how old this tradition was. The same fragment tells that Timomachos was the leader of the group of Aegeidae, who came from Thebes to aid the Spartans in their war against the Amyklaians. Timomachos instructed the Spartans in all military matters, and received great honours from the Spartans. The fragment does not give any more details about the cuirass or if anything else was done with it beyond display and viewing. Pettersson, drawing from Burkert, interprets the whole festival as an initiation, and the display of the cuirass was one part of getting in contact with "the future role of the men as warriors".[665] As has already been discussed, there is little else in the festival that had an obvious military connection. The display of the cuirass does not seem to fit the evidence for the nature of the festival, and it is possible that it was a later addition in the same sense as the history of the Spartans' conflicts with the Messenians was a later construction reflecting the situation of the fourth century rather than the events of the Archaic period.[666] Another reference to the expansion of early Sparta is the sanctuary of Zeus Tropaios (Paus. 3.12.9), which was possibly located by the road taken to the sanctuary from the city of Sparta. Pausanias dates it to the Dorian conquest of Amyklai, and any procession passing it on its way to the festival at the Amyklaion would probably have been reminded of the story.[667] We do not know the date for the sanctuary, or if the story

[663] Petropoulou 2012, 155-156. She offers no other data in support of her argument for the military nature of the sacrificial animal.
[664] A goat was sacrificed at start of the battle by Spartans (Xen. *Lac*. 13.8.), to Artemis Agrotera (Xen. *Hell*. 4.2.20; Plut. *Lyc*. 22.2; Thuc. 6.92.2), but this does not mean goats were exclusively reserved for military sacrifices.
[665] Pettersson 1992, 28. Pettersson gives examples of other festivals with similar patterns, seeing a parallell for the cuirass in the display of a shield at the festival of Hera in Argos (see Burkert 1983, 163, from where Petterson draws his interpretation of future role of warrior).
[666] Luraghi 2008.
[667] Kennell 2018, 653.

attached to it was a reinterpretation of a later date.[668] But it is tempting to connect it with the display of the cuirass during the festival. We could speculate that they were associated with the decline of Spartan power, as an attempt to focus on periods of past glory. In that way, the sanctuary, and the festival, would be connected with Sparta's (past) military might. However, even if this was the case, the evidence for the cult's military connection is not dominating the picture we get from the literary sources. The festival showed a range of other aspects alongside the military.

Now it is time to finally move to the consideration of the archaeological evidence, and to see to what extent it supports the alleged military focus of the cult.

[668] For Spartan cultural memory during the Roman period: Kennell 2018.

### 4.4. Amyklaion: material evidence

#### 4.4.1. Pottery

The decoration on the pottery in general cannot automatically be used as evidence for the concerns of the worshipper, because we cannot be certain if the pottery was made for dedication, or if it was dedicated after use elsewhere. If there was a large amount of pottery with iconography relating to warfare, this would perhaps suggest a military connection for the cult. Unfortunately, the pottery found at the sanctuary has not been properly published, as the focus of early excavators was more strongly on the architectural features of the sanctuary. The most recent excavations will no doubt correct this, and pottery from the Early Iron Age has recently been described in a short article.[669] However, pottery from the period of interest here has not yet been published.

As at some other Spartan sanctuaries, miniature vases were dedicated in great numbers at the Amyklaion. These were found in the ash layer, but unfortunately, no quantities or other details were given for the types.[670] The miniature vases can tell us very little about the nature of Apollo and Hyakinthos at this sanctuary, but they connect it with dedicatory practices around the area. Miniature vases have been found also in other sanctuaries discussed here, and that shows that Amyklaion did not differ from the other sanctuaries in this matter.

#### 4.4.2. Bronze objects

Among the bronzes found at the sanctuary there are figurines, as well as a number of pieces of arms, and other objects. Let us begin with the figurines.

Among these, there is one nude female figurine holding cymbals, one nude male and one female figurine made out of a sheet of bronze.[671] The figurine holding cymbals possibly refers to some of the musical performances held during the festival, as described above.

Two bronze spearheads were found by Von Massov and Buschor. These were assigned to a 'protogeometric' layer but testify to the early presence of the military aspect at the sanctuary. The typology offers little help in dating them. Snodgrass, who established an early typology for spearheads, accepts the protogeometric date for the examples from

[669] Vlachou 2012.
[670] Von Massow 1927, 58-61.
[671] Tsountas 1893, 10, fig.1, 2.

Amyklaion.[672] Even later attempts have not been successful in dating spearheads by their type more precisely, and there seems to be quite long periods of use for one type.[673] Two spearheads are published from Amyklaion: the first one is a crude model where the lower part of the blade has been beaten around the spear to provide a simple socket.[674] The second one has a 'golf-tee' shaped socket and a leaf-shaped blade. The tip is bent, as well as the lower left side of the blade.[675] This damage could be intentional; ritual 'killing' of objects is known from other sanctuaries and could have functioned to make sure the object could no longer be used after dedication.[676]

A fragment of a helmet with a partial inscription [A]MYKΛAIO[I] (fig. 13) was also found during the same excavation.[677] The decorative details above the nose guard resembling eyebrows are quite infrequent among the helmets at Olympia, and the majority are of a more stylized type than those on the fragment from Amyklaion.[678] Thus it is difficult to find parallels to this fragment. Since the layer contained Archaic and Hellenistic finds, it is not possible to date this piece with the aid of the context. If the protocorinthian date for the spear heads is correct, this fragment could be seen as a continuation of an earlier practise of dedicating arms and armour. In addition to these, in 2018 a part of a bronze helmet was found, but the preliminary report did not give any details on its shape or date.[679] However, it adds to the overall low quantity of unconverted military dedications.

Do these objects indicate a military focus for the cult? As already discussed in the introduction, the connection between spears and arrowheads and warfare is not straightforward and unproblematic. Both could be also used in hunting, an activity that even in ancient times was thought to be connected with training for war.[680] Even in cult, the same divinities could be connected with hunting and warfare: according to Xenophon, the

[672] Snodgrass 1964, 126, 131.
[673] Vokotopoulou refined some of Snodgrass' types (Vokotopoulou 1986, 300-301, fig 28). Baitinger established a separate typology for the spearheads at Olympia but was also unable to give them precise dates (Baitinger 2001, 34).
[674] Von Massow 1927, 34, fig 17, 2; Snodgrass type K (Snodgrass 1964, 126).
[675] Von Massow 1927, 34, fig 17, 1; Snodgrass type U (Snodgrass 1964, 131).
[676] Kalapodi: Felsch 1983, 147; Jackson 1983 with references to Olympia, Delphi and the Athenian Acropolis.
[677] Von Massow 1927, 37, 64, beil. VIII 8.
[678] Frielinghaus 2011, 31.
[679] Preliminary report 2018 http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=3357 retrieved 4.4.2019.
[680] Barringer 2001, especially chapter 1. Barringer discusses the sources comparing hunting as training for warfare on p. 11-15.

Spartans sacrificed to Artemis Agrotera before both hunting and fighting (*Hell*. 4.2.20; *Lac*. 13.8). And at this particular sanctuary the cult statue of Apollo held both a spear and a bow, as seen on the numismatic evidence. However, the presence of two fragments of helmets removes the ambiguity, suggesting that the cult did have a military aspect to it, and perhaps the spearheads referred to this as well.

From the Archaic ash layer excavated by Von Massow came a range of smaller bronze items: some jewellery, some small fragmentary pieces, a lower part of a statuette, a part of a tripod leg, a ladle, and two sheets with inscriptions identifying them as dedications to Apollo at Amyklai.[681] These contribute little to the understanding of the cult in general, although the ladle may have been used in connection with ritual drinking and dining. The jewellery supports the evidence we already have from literary sources, namely that women were participating in the cult, but the overall quantity is much lower than at the sanctuaries, which have been discussed above.

In addition, there were three spirals, which have been identified as holders for hair offerings. Similar objects, spirals or more simple bent sheets of metal, have been found in other Greek sanctuaries as well.[682] We also have iconographical evidence for ritual cutting of hair: a portrait of a boy from Eleusis dated to the third century B.C. shows that a lock of hair has been cut off from his right temple.[683] A hair dedication is depicted on a relief from Thessaly, on which two braids are accompanied by an inscription identifying the dedicators and the recipient.[684] Offerings of hair are also mentioned by a number of literary sources.[685] Thus while we know that hair offerings were quite common, this practice is difficult to track

[681] Von Massow 1927, 35-37, 63-64, fig 18, beil. VIII. The jewellery include: two fibulae, 13 rings, and needle heads. Among the fragmentary pieces were two decorative attachments with lion heads and a vine branch, decorated sheets of bronze, and a clasp with decorated ends. In addition, Kilian-Dirlmeier published 11 pins from this sanctuary (p.321).

[682] Such as the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia at Sparta: Droop 1929b, 199, plate LXXXV, i, k, l, m, n, s, t; the sanctuary of Artemis Hemera at Lousoi: Mitsopoulos-Leon 2012, 75, pl 12-14, no. 59-104; the sanctuary of Aphaia at Aegina: H. Thiersch 1906, 417, plate 116, 35, 40-42, 51-54, 58-59; Kalapodi (with remains of possibly leather inside some of them): Felsh 2007, 188-191, taf. 46.

[683] Clinton 1974, 104,"B", fig 13-14.

[684] Smith 1892, 366, no. 798; Illustration in Daremberg & Saglio 1896, 376, fig 2543.

[685] A thorough list of ancient sources referring to the practice can be found in Rouse 1902, 240-245. To that list can be added Thphr. *Char*. 21.3-4; Anth. Pal. 6.155, 6.156, 6.277; Paus. 7.17.8; Str. 12.2.3; Diod. Sic. 4.24.4; Ath. 11.494d. An inscription from Delphi records a consultation of the oracle on a desire to have children, where the man is encouraged to offer hair (Bousquet 1956, 550). See also Jim 2012, 315-317 for the vocabulary.

archaeologically, because the hair would not be preserved. None of the literary sources mention the type of rings discussed here. In fact, the only source that mentions the hair being held together by something is Herodotus. In a narrative about the ritual practices of girls and boys on Delos, about which he writes that before marriage, the girls dedicate hair to the Hyperborean maidens with the hair wrapped around a spindle, and the boys wrap it around a green stalk (Hdt. 4.34). Hence if any material object should be associated with hair offerings, it should be the spindle. However, it is risky indeed to interpret all spindles as associated with hair offerings in the lack of other sources more closely associated with the Peloponnese. With this being the state of evidence, the interpretation of the spirals as holding hair offerings is hypothetical at best.

The matter becomes even more complicated if we take into consideration that at Kalapodi some of the coiled rings showed traces of leather-like material, and were suggested to have held oracular questions written on leather.[686] One the other hand, many of the coiled rings were found with others, indicating the possibility that they were once parts of a larger item.[687] But this could also only mean that they were deposited in groups. While it is tempting to associate these objects with hair offerings related to initiation rituals, the uncertainty of their use should caution us against making such connection in the absence of other other supporting evidence.

To conclude, the bronze objects show that the military aspect was present at the sanctuary already during the protogeometric period, as seen in the two spearheads and continued to later periods with the fragments of helmets. The non-military dedications show that women participated in the cult, which we already know from the literary evidence. Beyond these, there is little among the bronze dedications to supplement our picture of the nature of the cult.

### 4.4.3. Terracotta

Von Massow separated the terracotta finds into two groups chronologically, the Archaic and the Hellenistic. In addition to these, he published some finds from a private collection, which were said to be from the Amyklaion. These are problematic for the present study, as

[686] Felsch 2007, 188.
[687] Felsch 2007, 189.

they cannot be used to support or augment any interpretation of the site, and are therefore left out of this discussion. The majority of finds were in a very fragmented state, and only in one case could fragments be determined to belong to the same figurine.

Starting with the Archaic period, there was a fragmentary nude male figurine and protome, as well as 4 fragmentary horse riders: 3 male and one female.[688] The male riders were of a simple style and were riding astride, while the female was wearing a dress and was seated side-saddle.[689] These have already been discussed in the context of the sanctuary of Orthia and the Menelaion above; it is worth restating that at least the female riders are strongly associated with female deities. Their presence at a sanctuary where no female deities are otherwise attested shows that they are not only associated with aspects of divine power related to female divinities, but an aspect that could be shared by both male and female divinities. The other finds of female side-saddle riders are associated with aspects of nature and fertility and based on the literary testimonia this is the case at this sanctuary as well. That there is only one example of the female riders is suggestive of a lower emphasis on these aspects here, compared to the large number found at the Menelaion.

No published terracotta finds have been dated to the Classical period. The current ongoing excavations will undoubtedly fill this picture once the first publications come out.

The finds Von Massow assigned to the Hellenistic period are more numerous than those of the Archaic but are mostly as fragmentary. He was keen to see some of the female figurines as representations of Artemis, but only three can be interpreted as such on the basis that one wears a quiver on her back,[690] and two are wearing a short *chiton* and are accompanied by an animal.[691] These figurines of Artemis are examples of the 'visiting gods' we have already seen at the other Spartan sanctuaries discussed above. The fact that in mythology she is the sister of Apollo is probably the easiest explanation for her presence

[688] Nude male Von Massow 1927, beilage IX, 10, protome beilage IX, 8. Similar nude males were found at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia mentioned above (Dawkins 1929a, pl XXXVII, Dawkins 1929c, 153, d).
[689] No photos were published by Von Massow, but they can be found in the photo archives of Deutsches Arhäologisches institut, negative numbers 128 (male) and 126 (female).
[690] Von Massow 1927, 41, fig 20 showing a reconstruction drawing.
[691] Only one of these is reproduced in the Deutsches Arhäologisches Institut photo archive, negative numbers 102 and 104. The other is described by Von Massow as being of a similar type but with the animal on her side more clearly preserved (Von Massow 1927, 41).

here, however, Artemis is also known in local cults of Sparta to have protected children and young women (see above chapter 2) and it is possible that these concerns are implied by the dedications of these figurines.[692] As we have seen in the discussion of literary sources, girls took part in the festival at the sanctuary, and Artemis figurines could have been dedicated by them, or on their behalf.

Non-identifiable fragments of female figurines were also found, but it is not possible to give exact numbers of figurines, as the fragments are very small. At least 6 individuals and six female *protomai* or heads can be distinguished.[693] In addition there were some schematic female figurines.[694] The male figurines are as fragmentary, but at least one depicted a boy wearing a himation, [695] and one depicted an adult male.[696]

A fragment of a nose had such a smooth back side that Von Massow identified is as a piece of a mask.[697] No other masks were found in the sanctuary, but we have seen many of them among the finds at the sanctuary of Orthia where they were probably used for a ritual related to opposing themes of ideal 'youth' and 'the Other' (see above section 2.6.2). While these masks are numerous at the sanctuary of Orthia, no other sanctuaries in Sparta have produced even fragments of them. Therefore, it is possible that this small fragment was misidentified, or it makes a stray find that for some unknown reason ended up at this sanctuary.

Terracotta animal figurines were only found dating to the Hellenistic period, and these included a hippocampus, a bird and two indistinguishable animals.[698]

The picture emerging from the terracotta dedications is not very clear. From the Archaic period we have figurines of both male and female horse riders, which can also be found during the same period at other Spartan sanctuaries. During the Hellenistic period these apparently were no longer dedicated. The Hellenistic period saw instead the emergence of some animal figurines. 'Visiting goddess' Artemis has also been found among

[692] This is of course reliant on Artemis' presence at the sanctuary of Orthia, which I have discussed in chapter 2. Since the figurines here date to the Hellenistic period, it is contemporary with the process of identification of Orthia with Artemis at the sanctuary.
[693] Von Massow 1927, 39-42.
[694] Von Massow 1927, 42.
[695] Von Massow 1927, 41.
[696] Von Massow 1927, 41.
[697] Von Massow 1927, 42.
[698] Von Massow 1927, 42.

finds from other sanctuaries. This perhaps indicates the special status of the goddess in Spartan religion, although that does not help us understand their presence in the sanctuary of Apollo. While exact numbers for male and female figurines is not possible to know due to the short publications, it is clear that female figurines form the majority during the Hellenistic period. This raises again the question of whether there was a female divinity worshipped at the sanctuary. Alternatively, perhaps it rather indicates that women were prominent among the worshippers. Unfortunately, these questions cannot be answered by dedications that lack inscriptional evidence.

#### 4.4.4. Other material evidence

In this section, I discuss the few items made of other materials that due to their small numbers do not justify individual sections.

First, there is a fragmentary torso of a marble statuette of a woman. The arms would have been stretched forward, and something was hanging from her left arm. Von Massow dates it to the Archaic period.[699] There is too little preserved of the statuette to determine who it represented, a goddess or a worshipper. Also in marble was a second 'visiting goddess' for the sanctuary, Athena: three fragmentary pieces of a female statuette wearing a helmet or aegis were discovered (fig. 14). These date to the Hellenistic period, the same period when the terracotta figurines of Artemis were dedicated.[700] Lead figurines depicting a woman wearing the aegis have also been found here (see below). From the sanctuaries of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, the lead figurines dated from the Archaic period onwards showed a wide range of different divinities (especially dedicated to Orthia), and future excavations may give further evidence for a similar pattern here. The helmeted statues of Athena further suggest a military focus for the cult here.

A stone stele excavated by Tsountas, but published later on by Schröder, perhaps depicts activities, which took place in the sanctuary.[701] The stele is crowned by a pediment, and shows a worn relief in two registers. The upper shows a human figure pulling an animal towards left, where two traces possibly depict an altar and the cult image of Apollo. The description Pausanias gave of the pillar-like construction matches with what is preserved of

[699] Von Massow 1927, 34, beil. VII 1,2.
[700] Von Massow 1927, 40.
[701] Schröder 1904, 24-31.

the figure to the far left on this relief, although it is impossible to make out the details. The figure was perhaps holding a spear. The lower register shows five figures, possibly participants in a ritual. Calame identifies these five figures as female dancers and musicians and sees the scene as depicting activities taking place at the sanctuary.[702] The inscription identifying the dedicator dates the stele to the third century B.C.[703]

Some lead figurines well known from the sanctuary of Orthia were also found at the sanctuary at Amyklai in the Archaic period layers. These included 13 wreaths and a figurine of a woman wearing an aegis (possibly Athena).[704] As we have seen above, wreaths were part of the celebration of the festival at the sanctuary, and these may have been dedicated as permanent versions of the real wreaths worn during the festivities. Athena is found among the leads at the other sanctuaries as well. But here the lead figurines add to the evidence of this 'visiting goddess' in stone described above, and show that dedications depicting her are found already in the Archaic period.

The iron objects included nails, studs and clamps, and they were all found in the Archaic period ash layer.[705] Some ivories were also found in the same layer, and these included two sheets with simple, incised decoration probably meant to be inlays.[706] During the recent excavations, an Archaic period fragment of an ivory relief depicted a leg wearing a greave.[707] This adds to our evidence of military dedications at the sanctuary.

The only glass object was a decorated rim of a light-coloured glass vessel with a blue lip from the ash layer.[708] Finally, the coloured stone objects included a green stone foot, a quartz ring, and two loom weights of dark red and blue-green stone.[709] The loom weights add to our evidence for women's concerns at this sanctuary. This meagre lot of objects does not offer much towards our interpretation of the site, but loom weights and possibly the ring point towards the presence of women. Loom weights were also found at the Menelaion, and it seems that women were an important group of worshippers at the

[702] Calame 2001, 177.
[703] Schröder 1904, 24-26.
[704] Von Massow 1927, 38.
[705] Von Massow 1927, 38.
[706] Von Massow 1927, 38, fig 19.
[707] No image has been published, the find context was a mixed contemporary fill (Preliminary report 2010, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=815 retrieved 4.4.2019)
[708] Von Massow 1927, 38.
[709] Von Massow 1927, 38.

Amyklaion as well. The literary sources refer to young women taking part in the festival, and thus the sanctuaries, and the divinities worshipped there, shared not only the military aspect but also concerns over life stages of women.

### 4.5. Discussion: military dedications and the character of Apollo at the Amyklaion

Due to the small number of published finds and the lack of continuity from the Archaic to the Hellenistic period, it is not possible to trace changes through time clearly or with certainty, but we can make some observations about the nature of the cult and the role of the military aspect here.

During the 'protogeometric' period, the military dedications included two spearheads, and sometime later two helmets were dedicated (but the dates are not known). The fragment of Aristotle describes the display of a cuirass present at the sanctuary, and the cult statue depicted the god armed with the shield and a spear. These pieces of evidence together suggest directly that Apollo's cult had a military aspect at this sanctuary although exact dates or developments cannot be currently observed.

During the Archaic period dedications refer to horses with both male and female riders. While male riders could be interpreted as representing the dedicators or other generic horse riders, the presence of female riders in a sanctuary of a male god is more complicated. Together they might suggest Apollo had a connection with horses. We have already seen horse riders, both male and female, associated with the Spartan cults of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, and there it was connected with aspects of cult having to do with nature and fertility. Based on the myth about Hyakinthos, Apollo has in previous research been associated with fertility and nature, and the female riders further testify to this.

During the Hellenistic period figurines of Artemis and Athena are dedicated in terracotta and stone. The armour of Athena points towards the military aspect, and Alroth explains the presence of the Athenas as visiting gods here precisely due to the assumed shared military aspect of Apollo and Athena.[710] While Alroth speaks about the aspects of these gods in general, and therefore we should be cautious about the local Spartan relevance, the sanctuary of Athena on the Spartan acropolis (discussed in chapter 5) also had military dedications. Perhaps we ought to be thinking more specifically in terms of an association between the specific deities within the local pantheon rather than in reference

[710] Alroth 1989, 112.

to the broader Greek comparanda. Further evidence for the military aspect during the Hellenistic period comes from the stele showing the god holding a spear with a sacrificial animal being led towards an altar. This iconography corresponds to Pausanias' description of the cult statue.

The undated loom weights point towards the presence of women and show that the god was not merely concerned with warfare and horses. The presence of several female figurines also indicates that the cult was relevant to women. Pausanias' description of the *chiton* woven by women, possibly for the festival, further supports the role women played in the cult. While his testimony is quite late, other, earlier evidence already testified to women's participation.

Hopefully, current excavations will complement this picture of the god and the type of worship taking place in the sanctuary. The preliminary reports note that material covering the whole period of use have been found, and so the gaps in the material seen above will be filled when the excavations are published.[711] We can see that Apollo was worshipped as a military god during the protogeometric and the Hellenistic period, but it is not possible to say if this was a continuation of the aspect, or a revival. Adolescent boys and girls took part in the festival, and the dedicatory material included objects related to women. It therefore seems that Apollo shared many of his aspects with the other gods at Sparta. However, the display of the cuirass perhaps indicates that the military aspect here was also connected to the Spartan military might during its early history and expansion. Therefore, it is possible that Apollo's aspect as a military god was related to a sense of past glory.

How does the archaeological evidence complement or contrast the nature of the cult suggested by the literary sources? The wide range of participants in the festival of Hyakinthia may already indicate a wide range of interests for the participants. On the other hand, the festival seemed to focus on renewal and young girls and boys of Sparta. There is little evidence among the archaeological material that directly refers to initiation rituals, or young people in more general terms. Initiation rituals have been suggested for the sanctuary of Orthia based on the literary sources describing the ritual whipping at the altar. While there was no archaeological evidence testifying for that directly, the presence of

[711] Preliminary report 2015, http://www.amyklaion.gr/?page_id=2942. Retreived 22.9.2016.

masks with depictions of young men and what might be classed as representation of the Other (opposite to Young Man either in age, gender, or beauty), and the (later) theatre built around the altar points to the spectacle of ritual, and probably to some narrative that dealt with different roles acted out with the help of the masks. At Amyklai, there is little archaeological evidence for the wide participation of large groups of people, nor is there much room within the sanctuary for many chariots. It is possible that some activities would have taken place outside the enclosed hill, circumventing the lack of space. The lager circular altar, the peribolos wall and the two different entrances show that the sanctuary was in no way a neglected, small sanctuary outside Sparta. Architectural investment was clearly significant, showing the importance of the sanctuary to the *polis*, despite the somewhat more modest range and quantity of smaller dedications.

As to the question of a military character for the cult, based on both literary and archaeological evidence, we can observe that the military dedications do not dominate the material, and references to the warlike nature of the gods are not overwhelming. The cult statue did hold a spear and wore a helmet, suggesting a military role, but the dedications and descriptions of the festival show that other concerns, having to do with young boys and girls, and women in general, suggest the main focus was not on Apollo's military aspect. Therefore, the material evidence at the sanctuary in this case also fails to support the idea that Spartan religion was overwhelmingly dominated by military concerns.

## 5. The sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos

### 5.1. Topography

The sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos is located on the Spartan acropolis, located in the northern part of the modern town. The acropolis consists of a natural hill, overlooking the Eurotas valley to the south. Less than a kilometre east is the sanctuary of Orthia, and the agora was located just south-east of the acropolis hill, making the sanctuary located in the centre of the ancient city. The main structures of the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos are located on the western edge of the acropolis hill. The Roman period theatre is built along the western slope of the hill; some of the finds from the sanctuary had made their way down the slope due to erosion and were subsequently found during excavation of the theatre seating.

### 5.2. The site and history of excavations

The first excavations at the sanctuary took place in 1907-1908, and work resumed again between 1924 and 1929 (fig. 15). The excavated remains of the sanctuary were located on the western part of the acropolis hill above the theatre, although the sanctuary itself must have occupied a larger area of the hill. Due to later activities on the hill during the Roman and Byzantine periods, the majority of the finds were made from fills of debris fallen down the hill towards the theatre and a Byzantine wall.[712] The plan (fig. 15) shows the southern part of the enclosure wall and a trench running roughly north-south where Geometric and Classical deposits were found.[713] There were late Roman dedications in the northern part of the enclosure, and these were the last pieces of evidence of religious activities at the sanctuary. Constantinian coins provide a *terminus post quem* for the houses built on top of the remains of the sanctuary.[714]

The excavations revealed ancient buildings both higher up on the hill and down the slope. A structure lower down the hill was identified by Woodward as a subsidiary shrine of Athena, while the main temple would have been higher up on the hill. The finds associated with that structure did not enable the conclusive dating of this building, but Woodward

[712] Dickins 1906/1907, 142.
[713] Dickins 1906/1907, 144-145.
[714] Dickins 1906/1907, 145.

gave an approximate period of use from seventh to fourth century B.C.[715] The roof tiles bearing stamps found at the sanctuary testify to repairs to the roofs around the third century B.C. These stamps are similar to those found at the sanctuary of Orthia and the Menelaion, and bear an inscription ΔΑΜΟΣΙΟΣ ΑΘΑΝΑΣΝΙ, referring to public work (ΔΑΜΟΣΙΟΣ) from the contractor (NI---). The ubiquity of these stamps around Sparta has been connected with wider building programs during the Hellenistic period, perhaps in association with Cleomenes III's reforms (see below section 5.4.4).[716]

### 5.3. Deities worshipped

The sanctuary of Athena on the acropolis of Sparta was mentioned by a number of ancient authors. The epithet given to the goddess at this location varies in our sources, and this will be the first topic of concern in this chapter before moving on to other literary evidence and finally the excavation and the finds.

Let us start with Thucydides, who writes that the Spartan regent Pausanias took refuge in the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos (of the brazen house) in the early fifth century B.C. and remained there until his death (Thuc. 1.134.1-3) (I will come back to this episode below in section 5.4.3). In addition, the Damonon stele (*IG* V 1, 213), dated to the last third of the fifth century B.C. mentions Athena Poliouchos (protectress of the city), while Euripides (*Tro* 1112) mentions Chalkopylos (with the bronze doors).[717] Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (1299, 1320) gives the epithet again as Chalkioikos. Thus, it seems that the goddess was referred to by at least two epithets, one of which invoked her as an owner of a temple with characteristic and unusual architectural features (bronze walls or revetments) and the other as a guardian of her city.[718] During the Roman period, these two continue to exist side by side. Pausanias (3.17.2) writes that Poliouchos and Chalkioikos were both used for Athena on the acropolis: "ἐνταῦθα Ἀθηνᾶς ἱερὸν πεποίηται Πολιούχου καλουμένης καὶ

[715] Woodward 1926/1927, 43.
[716] Spawforth forthcoming, 22, type 3 stamp. Woodward 1906/1907, 29, no. 13, fig. 4 b.
[717] Inscription Tod & Wace 1906, 64, no. 440; Tillyard 1906/1907, 174-182 (describing a new portion of the inscription found in the foundations of a late Roman building in the ruins of the temple of Athena). The date of the stele has been recently discussed by Nafissi (2013, 114-117), and Christensen (2019, 21-23).
[718] Niemeyer (1960, 22-23) argues that the bronzes were on the cult image based on the possible depiction of the image on an Imperial Roman period coin.

Χαλκιοίκου τῆς αὐτῆς", but he considers these two epithets to be referring to the same Athena.

From the epigraphical evidence, we know that during the Imperial Roman period both Athena Chalkioikos and Athena Poliouchos had priesthoods, but a stamp on a roof tile dated to the first century A.D. mentions only Athena Chalkioikos.[719] Since both epithets are attested in the Classical period, it is possible that both personae of Athena were worshipped in the same location. Based on Pausanias' description of the building process of the temple, Polignac argues that the goddess was given the epithet Chalkioikos after the temple decorated with bronze had been finished.[720]

As mentioned in the introduction, it is not unusual for a divinity to have two epithets in one location. While Poliouchos describes the nature of the goddess as being a protectress of the city, we should not dismiss Chalkioikos as being merely descriptive of the location. At least during the Roman period, both Athenas had priests and thus were probably receiving separate cultic honours, and Euripides' reference to Chalkopylos suggests this could have been the case in the Classical period. Here it should be pointed out that the numerous dedicatory inscriptions inscribed on objects found in the sanctuary mention only the name Athena and make no note of the epithet.[721]

Pausanias (3.17.4-5) also describes a range of other sanctuaries on the acropolis, and it is worth quoting it in full:

> "There is here another sanctuary of Athena; her surname is the Worker (Ἀθηνᾶς Ἐργάνης ἱερόν). As you go to the south portico there is a temple (ναὸς) of Zeus surnamed Cosmetas (Orderer), and before it is the tomb of Tyndareus. The west portico has two eagles, and upon them are two Victories. Lysander dedicated them to commemorate both his exploits; the one was off Ephesus, when he conquered Antiochus, the captain of Alcibiades, and the Athenian warships; and the second occurred later, when he destroyed the Athenian fleet at Aegospotami. On the left of the Lady of the Bronze House they have set up a sanctuary (ἱερόν) of the Muses, because the Lacedaemonians used to go out to fight, not to the sound of the

[719] Wace 1906/1907, 37. Priesthoods: Tsountas 1983, 23; Tod & Wace 1906, 70, no. 544.
[720] Polignac 1984, 85.
[721] Votive inscriptions were published in Woodward 1928/1929-1929/1930. One inscription on a bronze plating has ---χαλκεῖα (Woodward 1928/1929-1929/1930, 252, nr 7).

trumpet, but to the music of the flute and the accompaniment of lyre and harp. Behind the Lady of the Bronze House is a temple (ναός) of Aphrodite Areia (Warlike). The wooden images are as old as any in Greece (τὰ δὲ ξόανα ἀρχαῖα εἴπερ τι ἄλλο ἐν Ἕλλησιν)." (transl. W. H. S. Jones, Loeb edition)

Pausanias attests the presence of several sanctuaries and temples on the acropolis. He also mentions some statues related to warfare such as Nikai, and I will come back to them shortly. Not only is there a sanctuary of Athena described both as Chalkioikos and Poliouchos by Pausanias, but also another sanctuary of Athena Ergane.[722]

The military theme continues with the description of the sanctuary of the Muses, which Pausanias explains by a tradition that the Spartans would go to battle to the tune of music. Thucydides (5.70) makes a note that the Spartans specifically did *not* march to the tune of music for *religious reasons*, but to help keep an even step, implying that there were traditions connecting this practice that referred to religious motives.[723] Plutarch (*Mor*. 238. B-C) writes that the king sacrificed to the Muses before battle, so that those who fought would do so in a way that would be remembered with honour.[724] So, it seems there was a ritual connection in Sparta, at least in the Roman period, between the mode of fighting honourably and the patronage of the Muses. Thucydides makes no mention of Muses in particular, so we cannot be sure if this was an earlier tradition as well.

The temple of Aphrodite Areia behind the sanctuary is a clear reference to warfare.[725] During the excavations, an iron blade was found with an inscription identifying it as a dedication made by a Lykeios to "Areai".[726] No trace of a temple or any structure from

[722] A candidate for the sanctuary was excavated in 1926/27, when a small building associated with dedicatory material was identified south of the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos (Woodward 1926/1927, 37-43; Waywell 1999, 8).
[723] Hornblower 1992 (he notes this comment on p. 173).
[724] Kees thought the sacrifice was music (Kees 1933, col 703) while Carlier (1984, 261, n. 127) considered it to be a request for the effectiveness of the battle music, played in order to keep the army cohesive. For discussion on the Spartans' use of music at battle, see Anderson 1970, 79-82.
[725] For a recent study on the warlike Aphrodite, see Budin 2010 concludes that the aspect was mostly a Hellenistic addition to the goddess' repertoire of divine power (Budin 2010,103). See also Flemberg 1991, who traces the origins of warlike Aphrodite to the Near East, from where it came to Greece during the Mycenaean period, and suggests she was in Greece associated with warfare through her association with Ares (Flemberg 1991, 114). Against this see Pironti (2007, esp. chapter 4) who interprets Aphrodite as the goddess of *mixis*, involving both the sexual and violent aspects of human behaviour.
[726] Woodward 1928/1929-1929/1930, 252, nr. 8 fig 7. A bronze figurine of a woman has been identified as Aphrodite Areia (discussed below section 5.5.3).

this sanctuary was found during the excavations. When talking about the area around the theatre, located on the slopes of the acropolis, Pausanias (3.15.10-11) describes a sanctuary of Aphrodite Morpho, with a *xoanon* of an armed Aphrodite, so it appears that the warlike Aphrodite was also represented in this general vicinity.[727] It is, of course, difficult to say from which period of time these cults and their physical structures stem. Pausanias' reference to the wooden image of Aphrodite Areia being "as old as any in Greece" could suggest antiquity for the cult, but both Donahue and Budin, who have studied the cult of armed Aphrodite and *xoana* respectively, are unsure as to how old this statue, and by extension the cult, would be.[728] One of the bronze figurines found during the excavations was identified as depicting Aphrodite Areia, and I will discuss it in section 5.5.3.

Pausanias also describes a sanctuary of Zeus Cosmetas and a tomb of Tyndareus. No archaeological evidence for these were found during the excavations, and they may have been located outside the excavation area. In any case, these two do not show any obvious military colouring and are of lesser interest to us in the current study.

### 5.4. Rituals: literary evidence

While we have several literary sources mentioning the sanctuary, there is much less evidence for the nature of the cult, or the rituals performed at the sanctuary. I will first discuss the ones concerning the nature of the cult, and then move on to the other sources that might indirectly attest to the cult and the importance the sanctuary held in Spartan life.

#### 5.4.1. Rituals highlighting the military role of Athena Chalkioikos

An indication of a military significance of the cult comes from Polybius (4.35.), who refers to an old tradition for men of military age to march fully armed in procession to the sanctuary in connection with a sacrifice performed by the ephors. While he does not give more details about the ritual, the procession in full armour suggests a military connection for the goddess, and the role of the ephors indicates a civic importance for the sacrifice. Dickins associated this procession with the Athanaia mentioned in the Damonon stele referred to

[727] There is a Roman period inscription describing a priestess of Aphrodite Enoplios (*IG* V 1, 602),
[728] Budin 2010, 99-100; Donahue 1988, 146. Budin covers evidence for warlike Aphrodite on p. 82-96, and notes that there is relatively little evidence before the Hellenistic period outside Sparta (p. 96, and even then the argument for an earlier date rests on the identification of the figurine (discussed below section 5.5.3).

above, but it is not possible to be certain of this connection.[729] An easy parallel can be found at Athens, where a procession including armed men, travelled from the city gates to the Acropolis, in association with the cult of Athena Polias. Therefore, the procession is by no means unique in the Greek world.

Pausanias (3.17.2) tells a story relating to the sanctuary's history, writing that Tyndareus and his sons founded it, but failed to finish the work until Gitiadas made the cult image of the goddess and finished the building programme. The excavators attempted to establish a date for Gitiadas with the aid of another passage in Pausanias (3.18.7-8), where he mentions two tripods made by Gitiadas at Amyklai, standing alongside with others of which the oldest were said to have been tithes of the First Messenian War.[730] However, it is difficult to date Gitiadas based on this, and perhaps it is best to leave that question open in this study. Pausanias (3.17.4) also tells us that Tyndareus' tomb was located on the acropolis, but he makes no mention of an associated cult.

### 5.4.2. Dedicatory practices connected to military victories

There are two sources who mention the celebrated Messenian hero Aristomenes, who during the so-called Second Messenian War escaped from his Spartan captors (Polyaenus *Strat*. 2.31.3) and dedicated a shield to Athena with an inscription saying it was taken from the Spartans, with the intention to strike fear into the Spartans before battle (Paus. 4.15.5.; Polyaenus *Strat*. 2.31.3).[731] The sources for this story are quite late, but it is probable that it is associated specifically with the sanctuary of Athena for a good reason, that is, because of her role as the Poliouchos, the protectress of the city from military threats. For maximum propaganda effect, Aristomenes here chooses the sanctuary of a goddess, whose role it was

[729] Dickins 1906/1907, 140. The Damonon stele describes victories in various festivals, including the Athanaia, where victories are described in hippic and running competitions. For a recent study, see Christensen 2019. Athanaia is also mentioned in another inscription (*IG* V1 222), describing victory in dolichos (see Nenci 2018).

[730] Dickins 1906/1907, 138-140.

[731] Later on, Pausanias (Paus. 4.32.5-6) relates a story told by the Thebans about the time before the battle of Leuktra. The Thebans consulted various oracles, and the oracle of Trophonius replied that they should set up a *tropaion* with a shield from his temple and then they would win. The Thebans did as instructed and placed it in a place where it was visible to the Spartans. This shield was dedicated by Aristomenes. Pausanias also reports that the Messenians of his day think that Aristomenes was present at the battle of Leuktra and was the main cause for the Spartans' loss (Paus. 4.32.4).

to protect the Spartan army and polis, as a recipient of a dedication that is meant to subvert her support in favour of the Spartan enemy.

Pausanias (3.17.4-5) quoted above describes military dedications made at the sanctuary by Lysander: two eagles with Nikai upon them, in the west portico, for his victories at Ephesus and Aegospotamoi during the Peloponnesian war. Xenophon (*Hell*. 2.3.8) mentions Lysander taking prows of captured ships back home to Sparta, although he does not specify where they ended up.[732] The central location of the sanctuary on the acropolis, and the nature of the goddess as the city-protecting Poliouchos probably made this particular sanctuary attractive for military dedications. We will see below that there are not many real arms and armour found at the sanctuary, suggesting that perhaps the sanctuary was used only rarely for this type of display of victory and the goddess' favour, although other reasons such as the later reuse of arms and armour should also be kept in mind.

### 5.4.3. Rituals indicating a broader civic function: *asylia* and social stability

Moving on to literary sources describing events at the sanctuary, the passage in Thucydides (1.134.1-4) describing Pausanias (the regent) seeking refuge at the sanctuary in ca. 470 was briefly mentioned above. He was about to be arrested by the ephors in the street, but managed to run to the *hieron* of Athena Chalkioikos, whose *temenos* was nearby. When reaching the place, he took refuge inside a small building belonging to the sanctuary, so that he would not be exposed to the elements. Subsequently, the ephors removed the roof, walled up the doors of the building, and waited to starve him to death. When Pausanias was close to death, they took him out and he died immediately. The next passage is worth quoting in full:

> "…they decided to bury him somewhere near the city. But the god at Delphi afterwards warned the Lacedaemonians by oracle to transfer him to the place where he died (*and he now lies in the entrance to the precinct, as an inscription on some*

[732] Lysander also set up military dedications at Delphi: Paus. 10.9.7; Plut. *Mor*. 397F; Plut. *Vit. Lys*. 18.1. A marble statue of him was dedicated by the Spartans at Delphi (Plut. *Mor*. 397F) and placed inside the treasury of the Acanthians (Plut. *Vit. Lys*. 1.1). In addition, the Samians named the festival of Hera after him (Plut. *Vit. Lys*. 18.4), and he received sacrifices (*thysia*) as to a god and had paeans sung in his honour (Plut. *Vit. Lys*. 18.3). For sources on dedications after naval battles, see Pritchett 1979, 281-285.

*columns testifies (καὶ νῦν κεῖται ἐν τῷ προτεμενίσματι, ὃ γραφῇ στῆλαι δηλοῦσι*)), and that they should recompense Athena of the Brazen House with two bodies in place of one, since their act had brought a curse upon them. So they had *two bronze statues made and dedicated them to Athena to be a substitute* for Pausanias." (Thuc. 1.134.4., transl. by C. F. Smith, Loeb edition, my italics)

This story is also referred to in later sources.[733] Fontenrose saw this as a doubtful Delphic oracle: the elements of the story he considers to be based on facts include Pausanias' troubles in Sparta and his death as a suppliant in the sanctuary.[734] The rest are additions to what Fontenrose considers to be a possible *aition* of the two statues of Pausanias next to Athena's altar: Pausanias the author (3.17.6) talks about the pollution that Pausanias the regent had caught when murdering a woman, and Plutarch (*Mor*. 560F) describes in passing an oracle instructing the Spartans to appease the soul of Pausanias.[735]

A very similar story is told by Plutarch, who relates that Leonidas, Agis and Charilaos took refuge at the temple of Chalkioikos at various times. Leonidas, and his daughter, took refuge in the sanctuary in 242 B.C., and when he did not come to the trial to face the accusations of marrying a foreigner and leaving the country, as well as wronging the gods, he was deposed as king.[736] Leonidas subsequently left to Tegea (Plut. *Agis*. 12.4), only to be invited back later (*Agis*. 16.2). Following this, Agis took refuge at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos (*Agis*. 16.3.) but was seized and taken to prison (and subsequently killed) when he left the sanctuary to take a bath (*Agis*. 19-20). Finally, Plutarch (*Lyc*. 5.5.) tells how the king Charilaos fled to the sanctuary when fearing for his position when Lykourgos was implementing his laws, but after securing oaths for his safety, he left the sanctuary.

These stories are not unique.[737] Sanctuaries were regularly used as refuges before and after, in various parts of the Greek world, and any sanctuary could potentially serve this

[733] Polyaenus, *Strat*. 8.51; Diod. Sic. 11.45; Ael. *V. H*. 9.41; Paus. 3.17.7-9; Chrysermus 287 *FGrH* fr. 4.
[734] Fontenrose 1978, 130; 325, Q174.
[735] Fontenrose 1978, 130-131. See also Plut. *Hom. Mel*. 1; Pseudo-Themistokles. *Epist*. 4; Aristodemos 1.8.5, 104.
[736] "Leonidas, accordingly, took fright, and fled as a suppliant (ἱκέτης γίνεται) to the temple of Athena of the Brazen House. His daughter also forsook Cleombrotus and became a suppliant with her father. When Leonidas was summoned to his trial and did not appear, he was deposed, and Cleombrotus was made king in his place." (Plut. *Agis*. 11.5. transl. B. Perrin, Loeb edition).
[737] For a comprehensive list of ancient Greek supplicants, see appendix 1a in Naiden 2006.

purpose.[738] In Thucydides above (1.134.1) the convenience of the nearby location of the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos is specifically emphasised (ἦν δ᾽ ἐγγὺς τὸ τέμενος). However, Sinn observed a preference for main sanctuaries of different regions, and it is possible Pausanias, and others after him, chose the sanctuary due to its status as the city-protecting (Poliouchos).[739] But let us first see how the process of seeking a refuge functioned, and what was involved.

Sinn elaborates on the various ways that *asylia* ('prohibition against stealing') would provide protection:[740] firstly, it offered a general protection in a situation where the law codes of one's own *polis* would not apply, such as for pilgrimage, envoys, athletes, and artists, i.e. those who would travel outside their own *polis*. This would only be effective if it had been previously agreed on, or formally granted to individuals as an honour. Secondly, the sanctuaries themselves were protected by *asylia*, by having a status of *asylon hieron*, 'an inviolable precinct'. The territory and votive offerings inside this area were owned by the god and therefore prohibited to humans. This protected status offered a level of security that would often attract trade in valuable items not directly related to the god.[741] This second aspect would serve individuals in need of protection on a more ad hoc basis, and it was not limited to sanctuaries, but the protection could be invoked at cult statues, altars, or even hearths in private houses.[742] The process would involve stating the case for seeking refuge, with the sanctuary acting as a negotiator between the refugee and the pursuing party. The ritual was called *hiketeia* and involved sitting down on the altar or by the image of the god, and holding a symbol identifying them as a suppliant (a freshly broken twig or a strand of wool), and after this was completed, they had the status of a suppliant.[743] Following this, a priest would act as a negotiator between the suppliant and those accusing

[738] Sinn 2005, 77.
[739] Sinn 2005, 77.
[740] Sinn 2005, 72.
[741] Sinn 2005, 72.
[742] Of the latter, the most famous example is perhaps Lysias 1.27.
[743] Sinn 2005, 72. For the language of supplication, see p. 56-69 in Pulleyn 1997. Naiden arranges supplication in four steps: approach, gesture/address, request and argument, and judgement and response (Naiden 2006). Naiden's study concentrates on supplication where some group of humans was the deciding party, but Polinskaya (2013, 156) highlights the role of the deity as a decision-maker in mythological and poetic accounts.

them of a crime for example.[744] It is this part of the process that is subject to manipulation, and there are numerous examples where a priest would try to get rid of a suppliant by 'misinterpreting' an oracular response to what was to be done with the suppliant, or where a safe passage abroad was promised to the suppliant, only for the priests to tip off the pursuers about the plan.[745] So, why, then, were the main sanctuaries preferred? Sinn suggests that these sanctuaries could have the benefit of being supported by the authority of its role in the area, especially for political situations (as is the case for us here), making it less likely that the demands of the opponents were listened to.[746] But the geographically central location could also lead to the opposite result: having a political opponent in a central location could be a threat to stability.[747] It is perhaps in this context that we should see the outcome of Pausanias meeting his end at the sanctuary. A political opponent, accused of meddling with the Persians, would perhaps not be tolerated as a long-term suppliant at the sanctuary. His death, however, as a suppliant (although we do not hear of him going through the ritual in Thucydides) led to the oracle demanding the statues to be set up.[748] In other cases, the ending for the supplicants was not as tragic. Together with the case of Pausanias, they show that the sanctuary was associated with the internal struggles within the Spartan political elite. It is possible that the central location of the sanctuary played a role, but I believe Athena Chalkioikos' role as Poliouchos, the city protecting goddess, was also related to the sanctuary being chosen by several supplicants. If she was to

[744] Sinn 2005, 73-74. Sinn lists situations where the process was not respected or was tampered with. Not respecting the protection of the suppliant was often used as an explanation for misfortune, such as the madness of Cleomenes for killing suppliants at Argos (Hdt. 6.75.3), or when an earthquake destroying Helike for the Spartans' killing suppliants to Poseidon at Taenarum (Paus. 7.25.1-3).

[745] Sinn 2005, 73-74; Hdt. 1.159. For Leonidas, Plutarch describes a plot to attack him on the road to Tegea, which, however, did not take place (*Agis*. 12.4).

[746] Sinn 2005, 77. For Tegea, Pausanias (3.5.6) describes several people seeking refuge at the sanctuary of Athena Alea, and explains that the sanctuary held particular respect among the Peloponnesians leading to no requests being made for the famous refugees (Pausanias and Leotychides from Sparta, and Chrysis from Argos)

[747] Sinn 2005, 83. Sinn describes the internal struggles at Corcyra in 420s B.C., where hundreds of oligarchs sought refuge at a sanctuary of Hera in the centre of the town. A large enemy group was a threat to the democrats, who subsequently arranged for transport to sanctuaries further away (Thuc. 3.75.5-3.81).

[748] In Pausanias (3.17.7) we have the word ἱκετεύω, perhaps indicating the regent Pausanias' official status as a suppliant, *hiketes*. But Pausanias' version of the story differs in other ways as well as already described above.

protect the city, the periods of political strife within the city would fall under her 'responsibility' of ensuring the social stability of the *polis*.

In addition to being a place for supplication, Plutarch (*Apoph*, 19) also writes about Archidamus I (469-427 B.C.) taking two quarrelling men to take oaths and solve their differences in the temple of Athena Chalkioikos. While it is difficult to assess to what extent this short reference is accurate, it shows at least that during Plutarch's time the sanctuary was known for being a location thought to be suitable for a story regarding resolution of disputes. These accounts above, also described by Plutarch, all involve internal strife in one way or another, thus giving the impression that the sanctuary had a central role in resolving different social conflicts. The evidence from Thucydides confirms that the sanctuary held this role already in the Classical period. That Thucydides downplays the importance of this particular sanctuary as a mediator is not surprising. Thucydides is in general sceptical towards religious explanations for actions (see above section 5.3). However, Thucydides does not neglect or ignore religion. Hornblower argued that Thucydides' narrative "tends to confine religion to people's conscious or announced motives, but does not think that...it provides the 'truest cause'...for their actions."[749] Thus, while Thucydides emphasises the convenient location as a pragmatic reason, Pausanias may have chosen the sanctuary of Athena in part due to her role as the Poliouchos, whose sphere of concerns involved oversight of social stability.

In sum, from these sources on events taking place at the sanctuary we see ritual practices associated with both a broad civic role of the cult and a more specific military association. It had a role in acting as a place of refuge during political struggles in Sparta. While most of the sources for these are late, Thucydides' account shows that the sanctuary was associated with supplication already in the Classical period. The goddess' role as the protector of Sparta is likely the reason the sanctuary became associated with kings as supplicants, and why it also became the location for wartime propaganda in the case of the shield dedication of Aristomenes, and the location for military dedications after significant military victories. To what extent then can the cult of Athena be seen as a military cult? I will examine this next.

[749] Hornblower 1996, 62. See also Marinatos 1981; Jordan 1986.

### 5.4.4 Scholarly views of the military nature of cult

The view that Athena Chalkioikos had military significance has stemmed, in previous research, from the description of the armed procession, the epithet Poliouchos, and Pausanias' description of the cult statue.

Flower's argument for the military nature of Spartan religion is partially connected with the idea that all, or at least most, Spartan statues of the gods were depicted as armed, including the cult statue at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos.[750] However, there is no clear unambiguous evidence for the appearance of the cult statue. Pausanias' (3.17.2-3) description of it tells us that it was made of bronze, like the temple, by the sculptor Gitiadas. *On the bronze* were relief depictions of various mythical scenes, but it is not clear if Pausanias here means the bronze of the statue or of the temple, or both.[751] Further evidence for the image of Athena has been sought in the numismatic material. Imperial Roman coins (fig. 20) depict what appears to be a statue of Athena, holding a shield and brandishing a spear, and wearing a helmet. The lower part of the body is pillar-like with horizontal lines, forming another plausible location for the relief plaques described by Pausanias.[752] Whether this was Athena Chalkioikos or not, is less clear, and the image is nearly identical with the coin interpreted as showing Apollo at Amyklai (see above section 4.3.1). A military character seems more probable based on Polybius' description of the armed procession. Polybius describes it as 'ancestral', and Flower suggests this emphasis on the antiquity of the ritual means that it may have been a later, invented, tradition, possibly related to Cleomenes III's (227-222 B.C.) attempt to establish his version of military life and training in Sparta.[753] These reforms of the Spartan society and its practices and training was the subject of Kennell's book already mentioned before.[754] The evidence we have preserved does not give enough evidence for clear dates but what Kennell proposes is that Cleomenes III restored the *agoge* and common messes, after they had been abolished sometime between 270-250 B.C.[755] Another time when the *agoge* was restored after a period of abolishment, was shortly before Cleomenes III, during the reign of Agis IV (*r. ca.* 244-240

[750] Flower 2018, 433; Flower 2009.
[751] Summary of the discussion with references: Alroth 1989, 28-29.
[752] Imhoof-Blumer and Gardner 1964, 58; Grunauer von Hoerschelmann 103-104, pl 32, 41; Romano 1980, 128-133.
[753] Flower 2018, 441.
[754] Kennell 1995.
[755] Kennell 1995, 8-14. On the criticism of the gap and restoration, see Ducat 2006, ix-xi.

B.C.).[756] It is during these reforms where Kennell places the change in the ritual at the altar at the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia (see above section 2.5.1). Whether that meant a reform in the sanctuary of Athena, is another matter. Flower's suggestion that the term 'ancestral' in Polybius' account means that the armed procession was a later invention is possible, but it is equally possible that the choice of words really does indicate an old tradition. Examining the archaeological material can potentially shed some more light on a suggested change in ritual. If these third century reforms extended to the cult of Athena, and they involved an addition of a new, warlike ritual, we could see some change among the material culture.

Richer places Athena Chalkioikos among the military deities as well. For him, the description of the armed procession described by Polybius testifies to Athena's roles as a protector of the army.[757] He further speculates that the sacrifice at the end of the procession may have been conducted at the beginning of the seasons of fighting, in the spring.[758] The placement of the city-protecting Athena's sanctuary on the acropolis mirrors the situation in Athens, where Athena Polias' cult is also located on the acropolis, showing how the goddess thought to provide assistance at war is placed in a similar location in both areas.[759]

Flower and Richer strongly come down on the side of seeing Athena Chalkioikos as a goddess with military function. Certainly, literary sources provide a basis for this view, but they also show the site of Athena Chalkioikos emerges in the literary sources as a location for political refugees, in addition to rituals related to the warriors, military leaders, and ephors. As we have seen in the previous chapters, it is worth examining the range of dedications found at a sanctuary, in order to see if the image suggested by textual sources is supported by the dedications given to the goddess by worshippers. The literary sources relate to important figures or groups within Sparta, but the archaeological material has the

[756] Kennel 1995, 12.
[757] Richer 2012, 39.
[758] This is based on the sequence of events in Polybius for the year 220/219, and how Cleomenes III had been defeated in 222 at Sellasia, as well as the relationship between the ephors and the use of the Spartan army (Richer 2012, 39). However, it is not clear from his argument why this would make the sacrifice a' beginning of fighting season' -sacrifice. The Spartans sacrificed to several deities before setting out for a military campaign, and Athena was one of them at least at the border (Xen. *Lac*. 13.2-5), and possibly in the city as well (the latter relies on an interpretation of the 'associated gods' in Xen. *Lac*. 13.2-3: Richer 2012, 39; Chatzopoulos 1971, 157-158; Wide 1893, 13).
[759] Richer 2012, 198.

potential of illuminating the interests and concerns of a wider group of people who came to the sanctuary.

## 5.5. Athena Chalkioikos: the material evidence

### 5.5.1. Pottery

I have already discussed elsewhere the limitations of pottery as an indicator for the nature of a cult, and similar concerns apply here as well. The published pottery found during the excavations on the acropolis of Sparta dates from the Geometric to the Hellenistic periods (the dates for the Laconian pottery categories can be found above in Table 1, section 2.6.1). The main treatises on the pottery are by Droop (the Geometric and Laconian pottery) and Hobling (Megarian pottery).[760] There is some change in preference for the types of drinking cups and vases, but throughout we can see that the pottery reflects rituals of drinking and dining taking place at the sanctuary.

During the Geometric period, the decoration shows mostly geometric patterns, with a few human and animal figures as well.[761] The subsequent subgeometric group was found mixed with Proto-Corinthian and Laconian I ware, with orientalising stylistic influences visible in the decorations (lions, rosettes, and sphinxes).[762] The Laconian I, V, and VI gave the highest quantity of sherds, but the different timespans for each category means that the pottery was quite evenly distributed throughout the lifespan of the sanctuary.[763] The Laconian I sherds included plates, *skyphoi*, *lakainai*, *kylikes*, and some *pyxides*, showing that drinking and dining took place at the sanctuary. Miniature bowls without handles were found in this group as well, reflecting a wish to represent drinking and dining activities symbolically, in miniature form.[764] In a black ground style of pottery were small *aryballoi* and small bowls, and *lakainai*.[765] Among the Laconian II -group, Droop notes that the *lakainai* begin to replace the *skyphos* among the shapes, and plates are less common. *Kylikes* and trefoil-lipped jug are also among the pottery, as well as an *aryballos* in the shape of a helmeted head.[766] Grazing deer, lions, and gorgon heads are found among the decorations.[767] During Laconian III, the *lakainai* remain popular, with many plates, *oenochoae*, and *kylikes* also among popular shapes. Bowls and cups become rarer, and the

[760] Droop 1926/1927; Hobling 1923/1924-1924-1925.
[761] Droop 1926/1927, 50-55.
[762] Droop 1926/1927, 55-57.
[763] Droop 1926/1927, 57-58.
[764] Droop 1926/1927, 59.
[765] Droop 1926/1927, 62.
[766] Droop 1926/1927, 62-64. A similar aryballos was found in bronze, see below section 5.5.3.
[767] Droop 1926/1927, 66-67.

*skyphos* had now disappeared.[768] The handles sometimes have moulded heads, depicting lions and dogs, probably imitating decorations on metal vases.[769] The decorations include floral patterns, humans and gorgon heads.[770] *Komast* dancers and what appear to be hairy human figurines are among the more unusual scenes.[771] During Laconian IV *oenochoae*, *lakainai*, *kylikes* and plates are equally popular, with one decorated with a female appearing to be a karyatid (wearing what appears to be a cushion on her head). The quality of decoration is markedly lower than previously.[772] During Laconian V, small two-handled cups or bowls become popular, a trend that continues during the following periods. Small cups now make the majority of the pottery, while *lakainai* and *oenochoae* fall in popularity. A fragment of a *pithos* shows that while drinking pottery made the majority of the material, the sanctuary probably also stored some of the foodstuffs used in the cult as well.[773] Finally, during Laconian VI some Attic sherds enter the collection, while there is a continuation of the small cups and bowls from Laconian V.[774] Some new styles of decoration are found among the sherds, with one sherd where a helmet is depicted with white on a black background. And a red wash was applied on other sherds, probably imitating the Attic style of decoration.[775]

During the Hellenistic period, Megarian bowls and a moulded *phiale* enter the pottery assemblage.[776] The *phiale* was specifically used for liquid sacrifices, but as during previous centuries other forms could have been used for this purpose. There was also a group of fragments from kraters of varying dimensions found together in one pit. These kraters were decorated with relief images of mythological characters and scenes: Athena (seated, wearing a helmet, *aegis* and with a shield next to her), kidnapping of a woman by a man, dancing women, Amazonomachy, Zeus, Dionysos, Eros, Herakles, Poseidon and

[768] Droop 1926/1927, 67. One of the sherds has an incised dedicatory inscription identifying it as a dedication to Athena (fig. 13a).
[769] Droop 1926/1927, 68.
[770] Droop 1926/1927, fig. 5, 12 a-b, 13.
[771] Droop 1926/1927, 71. The hairy humans are only preserved from the waist down.
[772] Droop 1926/1927, 72.
[773] Droop 1926/1927, 72-73. Some coarse pottery was found here as well, with circular impressed decoration. Droop noted that due to the mixed stratigraphy of the acropolis, they are difficult to date (Droop 1926/1927, 78-79). The coarse fabric perhaps indicates storage usage.
[774] Droop 1926/1927, 75.
[775] Droop 1926/1927, 77.
[776] Hobling 1923/1924-1924-1925, 277-296.

Amymone, centaurs, and lions.[777] Kraters are not found during the preceding Laconian styles, but they too indicate drinking activities taking place at the sanctuary.

Some proto-Corinthian ware was also found during the excavations, with *aryballoi*, bowls, a box, an *oenochoe*, and a moulded vase showing a head of a gorgon.[778]

While there are not many inscriptions on the vases, it is possible that many of them were dedicated to the goddess after use. One painted inscription on a Laconian II/III *oenochoe* identified Athena as the recipient.[779] The shapes show that throughout their use, there was drinking and dining activities taking place at the sanctuary, with some changes throughout the period of study in the shapes that were preferred.

Interestingly, among the pottery from the sanctuary were fragments of Panathenaic *amphorae*, some of which preserved small sections of inscriptions probably describing the winner. In total eight *amphorae* can be distinguished, with dates from the second half of the sixth century to the beginning of the fifth century B.C. Where painting was preserved, images of Athena Promachos could be identified, as well as chariot groups.[780] As already mentioned above, fragments of Panathenaic *amphorae* were also found in the Menelaion, and therefore while the sanctuary of Athena seems a natural placement for this type, this was not a rigid tradition and the dedicator could apparently act according to their own preference in choosing a sanctuary of this type of dedication. Christensen places these fragments in the context of objects related to hippic victories in Sparta, and notes that a statue of Euryleonis who won in chariot-racing at Olympia (Paus. 3.17.6) was also located on the acropolis.[781] Therefore, he suggests that the acropolis could have been the preferred location for hippic monuments in Sparta.[782] While the likelihood of the Panathenaic amphorae being male dedications to Athena is certainly higher, there is, as I mentioned in the chapter on the Menelaion (3.4.1), one Spartan female Panathenaic victor, from the second century B.C., who won in the category of four-horse chariot race for fully grown

[777] Hobling 1923/1924-1924-1925, 297-308.
[778] Droop 1926/192780-81.
[779] Droop 1926/1927, 70-71, fig. 13a.
[780] Dickins 1906/1907, 150-152. Benz dated these to ca 510-500 B.C. (Benx 1998, 6.097-103).
[781] Christensen 2019, 109-113.
[782] Christensen 2019, 113, n. 178.

horses.[783] Either way, the fact that several objects referring to equestrian competitions were found on the acropolis testifies to the location's attractiveness for displaying this type of success. There is also a good chance that the sanctuary of Chalkioikos was probably chosen due to being that of Athena, in whose honour the Panathenaic games were held.

To conclude, the pottery assemblage testifies to the practice of dining and drinking, which is similar to the other sanctuaries studied here. This ritual activity is not in itself highlighted in textual sources, perhaps because such practice was common in festival celebrations, however, it allows us to add commensality to the list of activities taking place at the sanctuary. The presence of Panathenaic *amphorae* signifies Athena as the addressee of veneration linked to athletic achievements, another dimension that was not evident in the textual sources.

### 5.5.2. Terracotta

Terracotta objects found at the sanctuary included both mould-made and handmade figurines, and show both the military and other aspects. The stratigraphic information was not very well published, and the crude nature of the handmade figurines does not allow for a reliable typology. The majority of finds fall between the Geometric and the Archaic periods,[784] but evidence for continued use of the sanctuary in the Roman period consists of the terracottas found in the northern part of the excavated enclosure. Dickins enumerated "terracotta heads and statuettes of a late Roman type; among them several examples of an Artemis clad in a skin with a dog by her side".[785] I have already discussed these 'visiting gods' previously; it is not clear why a figurine of Artemis would be dedicated to Athena or in Athena's sanctuary, and there is no mention in the literary sources of a sanctuary of Artemis on the acropolis. Alroth explained the presence of Artemis figurines due to her importance in the Spartan pantheon.[786]

The figurines dated to the Archaic period included mostly fragments of female figurines and female protomes, 24 in total. Out of these only two depicted men, and of the

[783] Tracy & Habicht 1991, 214. See section 3.4.1 above for the Menelaion fragments. For the female Olympic victor in chariot race, Kyniska (Paus. 3.8.1; 5.12.5; 6.1.6). For women and sports in Sparta, see recently Christensen (2018) with references.
[784] Woodward 1927/1928, 76.
[785] Dickins 1906/1907, 145.
[786] Alroth 1989, 91.

22 females the majority of those, which preserved the head, were shown wearing a *polos*. The dominance of female figurines suggests that the cult held importance for either female worshippers, or those seeking help for women. A more specific concern can be found among the terracotta plaques also found here: one terracotta plaque showed a woman holding her right hand over her pubic area.[787] Another figurine showed a nude female figurine holding her hands over her breasts.[788] These types of plaques were more frequent among the finds from the sanctuary of Orthia discussed above (section 2.6.4) and should be seen as referring to fertility and female sexuality. Thus, dedications of female figurines suggest the importance of Athena in the lives of Spartan women, perhaps especially in aiding with fertility. Similar dedications found in several sanctuaries show that several of the goddesses had an important role in ensuring the fertility of the women.

The male figurines included one helmeted head, and one fragmented nude male figurine.[789] In addition to this, there were two fragmented reliefs, which Woodward saw as having been parts of boxes. The first one shows two warriors carrying shields and wearing helmets, and the second one shows Odysseus beneath a ram. The latter Woodward dated to the sixth century B.C.[790] While there are many fewer male terracotta figurines than female ones, the presence of armour in decoration shows that warfare was a concern for worshippers here.

As in the other sanctuaries of Sparta, there were terracotta animals among finds from the acropolis, including horses, mostly from the Archaic period.[791] The exact numbers were not given in the publication (at least four horses are mentioned), as some of them were fragmentary and those were only mentioned very briefly. Woodward notes that some of the horses had riders, but he does not say if they were male or female.[792] The presence of horses at the sanctuary connects it to the other sanctuaries in Sparta and suggests that the aspect of Mistress of Horses was widely shared between the Spartan divinities during the Archaic period. The majority of the horses were found in sanctuaries of Orthia and the Menelaion, and Voyatzis suggested that the proximity of the sanctuary of Orthia, where

[787] Woodward 1927/1928, 98, fig 8 no 52.
[788] Woodward 1927/1928, 90-91, fig 6 no 37.
[789] Woodward 1927/1928, 98, fig. 8 no. 53; 101, no. 59.
[790] Woodward 1927/1928, 104-105, figs. 11 and 12a.
[791] Woodward 1927/1928, 76-80, figs. 1-2.
[792] Woodward 1927/1928, 80.

horses were especially frequent among the dedications in various materials, may have influenced the dedicatory practice at the Menelaion.[793] The sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos was also associated with equestrian victories, as we have seen in the case of the Damonon-inscription, Panathenaic vases for horse races, and the references in Pausanias discussed above. Therefore, the meaning of the horse figurines at this particular sanctuary was possibly more strongly related to the success, or desired success, of the dedicators in equestrian activities.

In addition, 102 terracotta bells were found in the sanctuary. The bells were only summarily published in the 1920s, but a thorough investigation of them has been published by Alexandra Villing (2002). She counted 102 terracotta bells (and 34 bronze bells, discussed below), which range mostly from a conical to dome-shaped mantle, with a circular base.[794] The terracotta bells are mostly the same size as the bronze counterparts (3-5cm high) but they are simple and often poorly fired. Some have painted decoration in the form of horizontal bands. The better-quality terracotta bells could have suited for ringing, although no clappers were found with any of them.[795] The sound they would have made would have been much inferior for signalling purposes, and the terracotta would have broken more easily than the bronze ones. Therefore, Villing agrees with Dickins' suggestion that they were cheaper substitutes of the bronze bells, made for dedication.[796]

But what did they signify when they were dedicated to the Athena here? Bells are not common dedicatory material in Sparta. There are three bells found in the Menelaion (see sections 3.4.4 and 3.4.5), but no bells have been found at the nearby sanctuary of Orthia, or at Amyklai. Some bells, both in bronze and terracotta, have been found in other sanctuaries in Greece, but not in the same quantities as here.[797] The Spartan bells are dated to the Classical period (fifth century), and it seems that they become rare after this in other

[793] Voyatzis 1992, 277.
[794] Villing 2002, 224, 246. Some terracotta bells had a more funnel-like shape, some had a more 'tulip' shape (p 246). Nearly all were wheel-made, with only a few being handmade.
[795] Villing 2002, 245-246. Terracotta bells with clappers have been found elsewhere in Greece dating from the Archaic to Classical periods (Villing 2002, 245 with references).
[796] Villing 2002, 246; Dickins 1906/1907, 153.
[797] Villing 2002, 248-249. In the wider Laconian region, bells have been found in a sanctuary of Artemis (?) in the *perioikic* town of Aigiai, in the sanctuary of Apollo Korynthos at Longa in Messenia. Villing notes that they are similar enough to the bells from the acropolis to suggest the same workshop circles and similar date (Villing 2002, 248).

parts of the Greek world as well.[798] The bells found in such large quantities at the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos must therefore have a special meaning associated with the cult and the recipient. Villing places the bells in the context of dedications referring to military and equestrian activities, as well as indicating the public nature of the cult.[799] The fact that they produced a sound, or at least referred to this function in the case of the terracotta bells, could indicate they were used to signal something. In Nikophon, Aristophanes and Thucydides, the use of bells is attested as linked to guards; bells are used as their signal instrument.[800] In the case of the city-protecting Poliouchos, the bells could have been dedications made e.g. by retiring guards, but the fact that two out of three inscriptions on the bronze bells (see below) were made by women makes this interpretation less likely.[801] Another use suggested by Villing is in the context of battles: literary sources describe bells being attached to shields and horses, in order to rouse fear in the enemy.[802] While the sources mostly refer to Eastern customs, the practise of attaching bells may have come to Sparta through contacts with those regions. However, bells are not found in the sanctuary of Orthia, where there are horse figurines, so Villing does not think there is enough evidence from Sparta for this use of bells.[803] She finds another connection between the bells and Athena in the sound of the bronze bell, the sound of metal clashing against metal: as a warrior goddess Athena would be associated with the sounds of warfare, and literary sources describe Athena's battle cry as the sound of a trumpet used in battle.[804] Therefore, the bells could have been a reference to the brazen sound of the goddess, as well as her association with warfare and the craftsmen producing the bronze arms and armour. But this interpretation does not explain the women dedicators known from the dedicatory inscriptions.[805] Neither is there enough evidence for the use of bells in cultic dancing, although in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (1296-1315) the chorus calls for Helen to lead dances in

[798] Villing 2002, 254.
[799] Villint 2002, 276.
[800] Arist. *Av*. 842; 1160; Thuc. 4.125; Nikophon fr 27 Kassel-Austin.
[801] Villing 2002, 278-279.
[802] Aesch. *Sept*. 285-286; Ps.-Eur. *Rhes*. 383-384.
[803] Villing 2002, 279. Villing erroneously states that there were no horse figurines found at the sanctuary of Athena, thus not making a connection between bells and horses here.
[804] Villing 2002, 282-283; Pind. *Ol*.7.35-38; Soph. *Ajax* 1.17.
[805] Villing 2002, 283. There is a sanctuary of Athena Ergane on the acropolis according to Pausanias (see above section 5.3).

the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos among other places.[806] Finally, Villing suggests that the bells could have functioned as objects producing protective and purifying sounds. This would explain the bells found elsewhere in children's graves, and perhaps there was a particular ritual in the sanctuary of Athena that involved making the sounds from the bronze bells, followed by the dedication of the objects, or terracotta substitutes.[807] A connection between making loud sounds and funerals at Sparta comes from the reference in Herodotus (6.58), where he describes the funerals of Spartan kings: "…when they die, their rights are as follows: Horsemen proclaim their death in all parts of Laconia, and in the city women go about beating on cauldrons." (transl. A. D. Godley, Loeb edition). Thus, it seems that the sound of the bells could be connected with protective and purifying rituals taking place at the sanctuary, although sources do not mention bells being used for this purpose.[808] All in all, Villing could not suggest a single interpretation for the quite unique collection of bells found in the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos, yet all the different suggestions have to do with the sound the bell makes, and it seems to have had a special connection with the city-protective goddess. Since two out of three bronze bells were dedicated by women, Villing speculates that there was a link between women and children, especially in the fifth century, when women who died in childbirth began to appear on named tombstones. The importance of producing children for the *polis* was an especially important role for the Spartan women, and the emergence of the bells during the fifth century in the sanctuary of Athena Poliouchos could reflect these concerns.[809] If this was the case, we would perhaps expect to have found bells in the sanctuary of Orthia, where there are dedications relating to fertility, as well as growing up. Furthermore, the reliability of our sources for the practice of naming women who died in childbirth on tombstones (mainly Plut. *Lyk*. 27.3.) has recently been questioned by Matthew Dillon, who shows that the emendation of the wording in the manuscript has led to this interpretation. Instead, he argues that the women who received the special honour were those who died while holding a religious office.[810]

[806] Villing 2002, 288.
[807] Villing 2002, 289-293.
[808] Villing 2002, 293.
[809] Villing 2002, 295; Cartledge 2001, 116-117.
[810] Dillon 2007, p 151-152 for the manuscript. The wording was amended based on two inscriptions found in Sparta with ἐν λέχῳ (*IG* V1 713, 714). Only four tombstones in total have the inscription: *IG* V 1 713, 714, 1128, 1277. The first two are Hellenistic in date, and the others are from outside

Therefore, the connection to childbirth in particular is less likely, but the inscriptions suggest there was a connection with women.

Finally, the figurines with no date or associated pottery given in the publication consisted mostly of the simple, handmade types. These included more generic standing and seated female figurines, as well as numerous 'grotesques' (simple handmade anthropomorphic figurines) similar to those found at the sanctuary of Orthia.[811] The only explicit references to the military aspect of the goddess is one fragmentary figurine that seems to be wearing a helmet,[812] and one miniature shield made out of terracotta, with a painted decoration on both sides (fig. 16). No finds context was given for the shield.[813] This adds a few more pieces to the quite low quantity of military dedications in terracotta and shows the goddess' power over military matters.

Due to the lack of a continuous series of terracottas throughout the sanctuary's period of use the conclusions about the terracottas are somewhat limited. The Archaic period figurines show nude male and female figurines, already discussed in the contexts of other sanctuaries. These testify to fertility being one of the aspects of the cult at the site. The numerous bells in terracotta (and bronze) were also possibly related to women, although other suggested explanations are also possible. Some, but much fewer, objects were related to warfare and depicted men (one Archaic and one of uncertain date), but this evidence is almost negligible. This imbalance shows that while the literary sources associate the goddess with warfare, and the protection of the city, this does not lead to the goddess being only relevant to men and warfare. Clearly women's concerns were significant here.

Sparta, and therefore Dillon is not convinced of their value of confirming the reference from Plutarch (Dillon 2007, 152).

[811] Woodward 1927/1928, 83-86.

[812] Woodward 1927/1928, 83, fig. 3 no. 26.

[813] Woodward 1927/1928, 100, fig. 9.

### 5.5.3. Bronze

Bronze objects found in the sanctuary give a much stronger indication of the importance of military aspect at this site: they include anthropomorphic figurines, animals, as well as miniature and full-size armour.

The very few finds from the Archaic period in bronze included a female figurine wearing a *polos* and holding some round objects in her hands, a more fragmentary female figurine, five female *protomai* in relief, and one male figurine.[814] The figurines do not allow much insight into the aspects invoked, but a miniature cuirass dated to before 500 B.C. (fig. 17) shows that the military aspect was represented during this period.[815] In addition, a bronze *aryballos* in the shape of a helmet head was found, imitating this type of vessel found in terracotta described above.[816] Stibbe dated them to around 600 B.C.[817]

Again, we can see the same situation as with the terracotta figurines – the female figurines outnumber the male, further confirming the importance the cult had for women's concerns.

From the Classical period, there are only a small number of bronze dedications. Two male figurines were found: a nude male figurine, which Dickins interpreted as a trumpeter, although the cylindrical object the figurine held in front of his face has been lost,[818] and a nude male holding his hands behind his back.[819] These types are too obscure to suggest the motivations of worshippers or the meaning they may have ascribed to these objects.

The female figurines included a late fifth century Athena Promachos, a mid-fifth century Athena wearing a helmet with a dedicatory inscription to Athena, and a fifth century winged female interpreted as a Nike.[820] These figurines unambiguously attest the presence of the military aspect of Athena in the dedicants' conception of the local deity.

Only one bronze figurine can be dated to the Hellenistic period: an armed "Aphrodite", which Dickins dated to the late fourth to third century B.C.[821] He does not

[814] Dickins 1906/1907, 149, figs. 4 and 5 for the female figurines. Lamb 1926/1927, 92-93, pl. X for the protomai. No photo has been published of the male figurine.
[815] Lamb 1926/1927, 91, pl. VIII no 22.
[816] Lamb 1926/1927, 92, pl. VIII no 23; terracotta: Droop 1926/1927, 64-65, fig. 8.
[817] Stibbe 2000, 51. They fall into his subgroup Rb.
[818] Dickins 1906/1907, 146-147, fig. 3.
[819] Lamb 1926/1927, 84-85, pl. VIII.
[820] Athena Promachos: Lamb 1926/1927, 86. Athena with inscription: Lamb 1926/1927, 87. Nike: Woodward 269, 271, fig. 5 no 4; Lamb 1926/1927, 87-88.
[821] Dickins 1906/1907, 150; Dickins 1907/1908, 145-146, fig. 2.

specify why the armed female would be identified as Aphrodite, and not Athena. Budin saw this figurine as "possibly" depicting an armed Aphrodite because the figure is not wearing her *aegis*.[822] However, this is not as straightforward. Athena could also be depicted without the *aegis*, and here Dickins and Budin are probably influenced by Pausanias' description of a shrine of Aphrodite Areia nearby.[823] But it is significant that the figurine is shown wearing a helmet and holding her left hand high as if holding a spear, and in my view, it was more probably meant to be Athena. The armour she wears adds to the evidence of the military aspect at the sanctuary.

The only piece of real armour found at the sanctuary is the fragmented cheek-piece of a helmet, showing a boar (fig. 18).[824] The piece shows perforations along one edge, with a sharp turn right where the piece had broken off. This indicates that this came from a Chalcidian helmet of type VII such as found at Olympia, which has the cheek-pieces made of separate pieces attached to the helmet. The dates for the pieces found at Olympia range from the end of the sixth century to the beginning of the fourth centuries B.C.[825] That there are no other real pieces of arms or armour at the site is noteworthy. The literary sources described an armed procession to the sanctuary, and Athena's role as a city-protector could easily be imagined attracting dedications of arms and armour. However, we should keep in mind questions of preservation, as metal could easily be melted down and reused.[826] As a comparandum, we may note that the Athenian Acropolis inventory lists give large quantities of arms and armour, but archaeological evidence of these objects is sparse.[827]

Along with these anthropomorphic figurines there were animals (4 bulls, 3 lions, one horse, an owl, 2 rams, one frog), pins, rings, as well as a series of bells, some of which included dedicatory inscriptions to Athena.[828] The majority of the animals were of late sixth

[822] Budin 2010, 86.
[823] LIMC II has numerous examples of depictions of Athena without the aegis, although the ones with are slightly more common. Alroth did not include this figurine among her possible Aphrodite 'visiting gods' (Alroth 1989, 90). A debate over the possible presence of Athena at the sanctuary of Aphaia on Aegina is discussed in Polinskaya 2013 (p. 181-184), and further shows how difficult it is to identify goddesses based on limited data and missing attributes.
[824] Lamb 1926/1927, 93, fig 6.
[825] Frielinghaus 2011, 60.
[826] Linders 1989-1990.
[827] Harris 1995.
[828] Dickins 1906/1907, 150; Lamb 1926/1927, 89-91.

to early fifth century B.C., with one horse from the fourth century or even later.[829] The presence of horses in bronze adds to the evidence from terracotta, showing the connection between Athena and horses already discussed on above. The owl is clearly a reference to Athena.[830] There were four bulls in total, one with an inscription identifying the recipient as Athena.[831] These could be representations of sacrificial animals, substitutes, or symbols of the ritual act of sacrifice, as I have already discussed above. The pins and rings are dedications that have been found in other sanctuaries as well, and they were probably dedicated by women. The meaning of the bells was already discussed earlier, and it suffices here to say that there were 34 bronze bells, some fragmentary, and ranging from 2cm to 8cm in diameter. Not all of them had a clapper preserved, but the ones that did, had it made out of iron; therefore, most of them were fully functional, as opposed to the terracotta bells above, which were less likely to be functional in making a sound.[832] Three bells are inscribed with the name of the dedicators (one man and two women) and the recipient, Athena. Four further bells have partial inscriptions referring to Athena.[833] The inscriptions have helped with the dating of the bells, but since Laconian script used old letterforms alongside newer ones in the Classical period, they can only be placed at some time in the fifth century B.C.[834]

It is not straightforward task to draw conclusions about the range of aspects represented by this small lot of finds. The miniature breastplate from the end of the Archaic period and the Classical cheek piece from a helmet provide evidence for the military aspect being important at the sanctuary during these periods. In addition, we have figurines of armed Athenas, further emphasizing her martial nature at the sanctuary. But we also have several figurines of men and women, and here we have again the same situation as with the terracottas where the female figurines outnumber the men, especially during the Archaic period. The goddess is clearly and strongly associated with women's concerns alongside her role as a military goddess.

[829] Lamb 1926/1927, 89-91.
[830] Bevan 1986, 33-34.
[831] Lamb 1926/1927, 89-90.
[832] Villing 2002, 243-244. The combination of bronze bell with an iron clapper produces the best sound, and this is still used today for church bells (Villing 2002, 244, n 12).
[833] Villing 2002, 245.
[834] Villing 2002, 245.

### 5.5.4. Other material evidence

Because of the small number of objects from each of the categories of material (bone and ivory, lead, iron, stone) it seemed reasonable to group them together in this section.

Perhaps the most impressive and explicit military dedications were several pieces of an over life-size marble statue of a helmeted warrior wearing greaves, and a piece of a shield he was probably carrying (fig. 19). Woodward dated the statue to 480-460 B.C.[835] The excavators suggested that it represented Leonidas, whose remains were supposedly buried nearby.[836]

The other objects in stone included a fragment of a statuette depicting Athena dating from the Roman period, but no further details or illustrations were published of it. Also, from the Roman period is a child's torso, suggesting the cult moved on to focus on children during this later period. In addition, there were some architectural fragments in stone.[837]

Two marble jumping weights with dedicatory inscriptions from two different men are dated to late sixth and early fifth century B.C.[838] As we have already seen, the other athletic references from the sanctuary have mainly to do with equestrian competitions, and the Damonon stele mentions running races. These two add to the evidence that the sanctuary was a place for displaying athletic achievements and that Athena was thought to be an appropriate patroness in this area of human activity.[839]

The bone and ivory objects found at the sanctuary included miscellaneous pieces: one knife handle, disc and strips with incised decorations, four needles, fragments of bone tubes (which were possibly flutes), one bone reel and two ivory dice.[840] These objects are too few and generic to offer insights into the concerns of worshippers or cult personnel.

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[835] Woodward 1923/1924-1924/1925, 253-260. Fragments of a female marble statue were also found nearby, although it may belong to another sanctuary next to ours (Woodward 1926/1927, 45; Palagia 1993).
[836] Woodward 1923/1924-1924/1925, 264-265; Paus. 14.1. The tomb was supposed to be opposite the theatre.
[837] Dickins 1906/1907, 154.
[838] Paitiades to Athena: Woodward 1925/1926, 251-252; Kleocha[res] *IG* V1 216; Woodward 1907/1908, 137.
[839] Hodkinson 1999, 155. He notes that the athletic dedications of known providence come mainly from the acropolis and Amyklai.
[840] Dickins 1906/1907, 153.

Lead figurines already known from other Spartan sites were not very numerous: 83 wreaths, one woman, three warriors, one sceptre(?), one palm branch, and 15 animals of which Dickins notes that most were deer.[841] The extremely low numbers of leads found at this sanctuary, which is located so close to Artemis Orthia seems very significant, considering that there were over 100,000 lead figurines found there. Clearly, lead figurines were a customary requirement at Orthia and only an option at Athena Chalkioikos. Three warrior figurines add on to our evidence of military function of the cult, but the more numerous deer figurines are particularly interesting. As mentioned above, the appearance of deer in the Classical period at the sanctuary of Orthia was interpreted as indicating the association of Orthia with Artemis, whose attribute was the deer. The palm branch could also refer to Artemis. These should probably be considered as indirect 'visiting gods' in the context of a sanctuary of Athena.

The iron objects included a half of a double axe, and a spearhead.[842] No finds context information was given for these objects. Additional iron spearheads were found associated with the portico south of the sanctuary enclosure wall.[843] The spearhead adds to our evidence of the military aspect, as well as our very small number of real arms and armour at the sanctuary, but as mentioned already, these are very difficult to date without contextual evidence.

[841] Dickins 1906/1907, 153.
[842] Dickins 1906/1907, 154.
[843] Woodward and Hobling 1923/1924, 245, 246-247. One spearhead was found in a pit with iron spits, possibly as part of a deposit after clearing some of the objects from the sanctuary. However, the association of these objects and the portico with the sanctuary of Athena is not clear. As mentioned in the beginning of the chapter, this portico was identified as an additional shrine by the excavators.

### 5.6. Discussion: military dedications and the character of Athena on the acropolis

The archaeological evidence shows that several aspects were invoked at the same time in the sanctuary, as has been the case with all the other sanctuaries discussed above.

The dedications related to warfare can be found throughout the period under investigation here. From the Archaic period until the end of the Hellenistic period, worshippers dedicated various type of military dedications. Among the terracotta figurines, a helmeted figurine and a miniature shield of unknown date, as well as the bronze miniature cuirass from before 500 B.C., and Archaic bronze and terracotta *aryballoi* shaped as a helmeted man are among the converted military dedications. The lead figurines were not published with contextual information, but they included 3 warriors. This is an incredibly low number, compared to the very large quantities of these dedications found at the nearby sanctuary of Orthia. There must be reasons of custom behind the difference between these two sanctuaries. During the fifth and fourth centuries bronze figurines depicting an armed female probably show the cult recipient Athena as a war goddess. The fifth century bronze Nike figurine could be seen as referring to military victory, and literary sources describe military dedications made here by Lysander after battles during the Peloponnesian war further emphasise the cult's military focus. The over life-size marble statue depicting a helmeted man from 480-460 B.C. show the sanctuary as a location for large scale military dedications.

Among the 'raw' military offerings there are fewer objects. The cheek piece of a bronze helmet has a wide chronological range (the type can be dated from the end of the sixth to the beginning of the fourth centuries B.C.), but it is an important addition to the otherwise mostly 'converted' military dedications. In addition, there is an iron spearhead of unknown date found in the sanctuary. Several more iron spearheads were found in the portico south of the sanctuary enclosure wall, but it is unclear if they were associated with our cult, or if the portico was associated with the cult of some of the other divinities we know from the vicinity.

The literary sources also associate the sanctuary with war. The procession of armed men, and the dedicated shield further emphasise the military connection of this cult. When the armed procession was established is less clear; it may have been part of a Hellenistic period reforms going on Spartan society in general. One way to determine a change in cult is to see if the dedicatory material demonstrated a change, and here especially the military

dedications would be expected to change, if a new military aspect of the cult was established, or greater emphasis was placed on the military character of the cult. This is not the case as far as we can see from the dedications found at the sanctuary. The military dedications span the whole period under investigation here, and so if the procession was established in the Hellenistic period during wider reforms in Spartan society, it did not impact the pattern of dedication. We should also keep in mind the state of preservation, and that dedications could have been taken and reused for something else.

There are other literary sources from Sparta associating Athena with military rituals. She may have been one of the recipients of sacrifices before setting out on campaign, and when the army was about to cross the border.[844] The source for these is Xenophon, who does not make a connection with Athena *Chalkioikos*/*Poliouchos*. I mentioned in the Introduction how scholars have debated the nature of divinities and if different epithets meant different conceptions of the divinity. It remains unclear if the Spartans would have considered the Athena of the sacrifices as separate from the Athena whose sanctuary was on the acropolis.

But in addition to the military connection here, the sanctuary was also associated with asylum, and we have several different occasions described in the literary sources where a Spartan leader sought refuge here. The location of the sanctuary perhaps played a role: the close proximity to the agora made this sanctuary a convenient destination during time of duress. But as Sinn argued, the main sanctuaries of areas are often preferred by refugees in ancient Greece. The perceived central authority of the divinity played a role, when choosing the destination. On the other hand, this particular centrality of location also made the refugees a threat to stability, as their continued presence reminded the society around it about the causes leading up to seeking asylum. The accusation of meddling with the Persians during the war made Pausanias a particular threat, and probably led to his death in the sanctuary. The role of the goddess as Poliouchos, the city protecting goddess, could not protect Pausanias in this situation, but an oracle later demanded his remains to be moved and buried by the entrance to the sanctuary, and the two statues to replace the life

[844] Before setting out: Xen. *Lac*.13.2-3 describes sacrifices to Zeus Agetor and associated gods. One of these associated gods may have been Athena (Richer 2012, 39; Wide 1893, 13; Chatzopoulos 1971, 157-158, all discussing Pausanias 3.13.6, where he describes an altar to Zeus, Athena and Dioscuri. At the border: Xen. *Lac*. 13.2-5, describing a sacrifice to Zeus and Athena.

that was lost. Here, the authority of the sanctuary was re-established with the dedication and reburial.

In addition to the role the sanctuary played during civil strife, it was also maintained by public funds. The roof tiles found here bear the same stamp as those found in the sanctuaries of Orthia and the Menelaion, and show that public funds were being used for the new roof tiles in the third century B.C. This has been tentatively connected with the reforms of Cleomenes III, who set out to restore or reform the Spartan education system during his reign (244-240 B.C.).[845]

The sanctuary also held importance for female worshippers, which does not come across in the literary sources describing the sanctuary. Archaic period terracotta figurines are mostly female, and some show the women nude and accentuating the pubic area by hand gesture. The jewellery also highlights the role of female worshippers in the cult. If there is overlap with some dedications related to women in the different sanctuaries discussed here, there are also some differences. Importantly, objects related to textiles and weaving are not present in the sanctuary of Athena, indicating that her significance to female worshippers did not include the life stages we have seen at the sanctuaries of Orthia and the Menelaion.

Horses were also found at the sanctuary as has been the case with the other sanctuaries discussed above. Some of these figurines had riders, but unfortunately the publication did not specify if they were male or female. In my previous discussion on the meaning of horses, and especially female riders, I have referred to Voyatzis' study showing that these figurines were mainly found in the sanctuaries of goddesses and those associated with fertility and nature. However, as discussed in the introduction, the meaning of an object can be ambiguous, and we should consider particular local contexts as well. Here, the imagery of the horse receives a different context from the other three sanctuaries, because we have other evidence for the sanctuary being associated with success in equestrian competitions. The Panathenaic *amphorae* dated to the sixth and fifth centuries, and the Damonon-stele, dated to the end of the fifth century, as well Pausanias' description of a statue of a female Olympic victor in chariot racing Euryleonis in 368 B.C. The horses could indicate Athena's association with the horse in more general terms, but they could also be

[845] On the nature of Cleomenes' reforms, see section 5.4.4 above.

part of this dedicatory practice by successful, or aspiring, horse racers. As Hodkinson showed in his study on display of wealth, the hippic monuments on the acropolis at Sparta demonstrate the willingness to display success at this very central location.[846]

Some of the animal figurines could have had a reference to the cult. The four bronze bulls could have been a reference to sacrificial animals, either as a memento or a substitute for a real sacrifice. The one bronze owl on the other hand is most likely a reference to the goddess herself.

Finally, a unique group of objects found nearly exclusively at this sanctuary are the large quantities of bells, both in terracotta and bronze. Their meaning remains unclear, but they seemed to have had a cultic significance through the sound they made. Apart from the three bells found at the Menelaion, they are only found at the sanctuary of Athena.

To conclude, from an overview of the literary and archaeological evidence for the cult of Athena Chalkioikos, we can observe that she was quite strongly associated with warfare. Both literary sources as well as archaeological material demonstrate religious rituals related to warfare. However, while it is fair to describe this cult as having a military aspect, we can observe that this was not the only focus of cult. Again, as elsewhere, women's participation is visible among the archaeological material, highlighting the importance of combining both the literary and archaeological evidence before drawing conclusions about the nature of the cult. The evidence from both the literary and archaeological material also demonstrate Athena's significance for the elite's display of athletic success, with various types of objects being used to commemorate, and perhaps thank the goddess for, success in equestrian competitions.

[846] Hodkinson 2000. The display of four-horse chariot racing victories at Olympia are discussed on p. 320-323, showing that the presentation of success was not only made for Spartan audiences.

## 6. Conclusions

In this dissertation, I have discussed literary and material evidence from four different sanctuaries in Sparta: Orthia, Helen and Menelaos, Apollo at Amyklai, and Athena Chalkioikos. My goal was to compare the two types of evidence in order to see whether an image of militarism that scholars tend to evince from literary sources on Spartan religion is supported by material evidence, that is, objects that can be viewed as dedications in particular. I have detected a range of different concerns among the dedications given to the divinities by the worshippers. On the basis of my findings, it can be said with confidence that war was only one among many concerns for the worshippers. I will first summarise the evidence for and in addition to military concerns at the four sites, and then move to discuss military dedications in Sparta in general. I will wrap up the discussion by adding an additional set of data related to another literary claim, namely that all Spartan statues of gods were armed.

### Analysis of evidence from the four sanctuaries: a summary

At the sanctuary of Orthia, a wide range of different concerns can be identified among the literary and archaeological evidence for the cult. During the earlier periods of worship at the sanctuary, below the sand layer dated to 570/560 B.C., there are several types of dedications, which then disappear or decrease with time after the sand. These finds suggest that the goddess was associated with women's concerns, through the dedications of pins, weaving equipment, and small lead models of textiles. There are some objects showing a male/female pair, leading to suggestions that during a short period of time (these are dated to the seventh century) Orthia may have had a male consort, unless this motif was an import and other, unknown to us, meanings were associated with the pair. During this early period, we also have lead depictions of a female head flanked by horses, as well as terracotta figurines of horses. The goddess, as well as the other divinities from the Spartan sanctuaries discussed here, was associated with the horse during this early period, while other animals were represented in small numbers. After the layer of sand, some changes take place at the sanctuary and in the cult. Dedications referring to a huntress and deer emerge among the lead figurines, perhaps suggesting a change towards Orthia's association with Artemis, for which we have epigraphic material only from the Roman period. At the same time, inscriptions show that dedications were being made to Eileithyia, who in later

periods is described as having a shrine nearby. It seems that during the period immediately following the flooding the sanctuary was reorganised in terms of the structures as well as the focus of the cult. The terracotta masks begin to increase in number during this time as well, suggesting a ritual action related to opposing ideas of 'ideal youth' and 'the Other'. In more general terms, the pottery suggests activities of drinking and dining, and figurines of musicians and musical instruments suggests that music was part of the cult practice.

The archaeological evidence also included some military dedications, from the earliest period of the lead figurines, until the Hellenistic period. Very few 'raw' military dedications were found here, while lead warrior figurines were found in very large quantities. Some other objects also showed depictions of warriors. However, these military dedications are vastly outnumbered by other dedications, which show a wide range of activities and concerns for the sanctuary. Therefore, the archaeological material does not support a notion of a specifically military focus for the cult – it was only one side of what was clearly a complex cult. The literary sources do not give much support for the military nature of Orthia either, as the rituals of stealing or choral dancing do not have a direct military link. The evidence for the cult image being armed relies on an identification of third century numismatic material, and thus Flower's interpretation of Orthia as a specifically military goddess cannot be supported.

At the sanctuary of Helen and Menelaos the archaeological material shows some parallels to the sanctuary of Orthia, but also some differences and a narrower range of dedications. The two cult recipients at the Menelaion also make it difficult to distinguish who was the recipient of which objects, although literary evidence from elsewhere gives us some indications.

The method of excavations and the particular contexts for the finds mean that we cannot retrieve detailed dates for many of the objects, and it is more challenging than at Orthia to distinguish changes through time. Before 620 B.C., the dedications have less direct references to particular cultic concerns than the later period finds. The pins constitute an exception, as they are related to women's participation in the cult. An inscription dated to the seventh century B.C. identifies the recipient as Helen, the wife of Menelaos, emphasising her role as wife. Later literary sources also describe marriage rituals related to Helen, and while they are later in date, the inscription suggests this focus on marriage was present from early on.

Among the dedications associated with Laconian II pottery (620-580 B.C.), lead figurines include similar quantities of female and Mistress of Animals varieties, as well as the warriors. During this period of time, the lead models of textiles appear in the assemblage; this is slightly later than at the sanctuary of Orthia, where they were found from before 650 B.C., i.e. the very beginning of the lead dedications. These model textiles show the cult was related to women's concerns, and this continues to the later periods as well. Terracotta horses appear in this period, but they are most popular in the later group of dedications, reflecting again similarities with the horse imagery at the sanctuary of Orthia.

Among the dedications dated from 580 B.C. and later new types of dedications appear, suggesting a change in the cult. Lead figurines of deer appear here, at the same time as they emerge at the sanctuary of Orthia. It seems that both these two local divinities (Helen and Orthia) begin to be associated with the imagery of Artemis. Similarly, a framed amphora, referring to the Dioscuri, is found here, suggesting a connection with the Spartan kingship. Menelaos' identity as the mythical king of Sparta gives this dedication a more direct connection with kingship than at the sanctuary of Orthia, where similar dedications were found. However, here there is only one piece, suggesting that this was not a particularly central focus for the cult, or for Menelaos' cultic identity as the recipient. Horse figurines with both male and female riders are most popular during this period. While this group of dedications is dated from 580 B.C. onwards, at the sanctuary of Orthia they were most popular until 580 B.C. and declined in quantity afterwards.

The aspects of fertility and sexuality appears in the sanctuary in the form of nude figurines in this third chronological group, and another new element are the terracotta loom weights. These show that the focus on women remains strong at the sanctuary, adding to the lead models of textiles.

During the late sixth century B.C., several Panathenaic amphorae were dedicated at the sanctuary. The only other sanctuary studied here where these have been found is the sanctuary of Athena on the acropolis, suggesting that the Menelaion, despite being located on the other side of the river from the centre of the city, was considered suitable for the display of these high value items. The civic importance of the cult can be seen in the roof tiles, which, as at the sanctuary of Orthia, show that during the third century B.C. public funds were used for a roof in the sanctuary.

When it comes to military dedications, the lead warriors testify to this aspect of divine power, but in contrast to the sanctuary of Orthia, real arms have also been found here. A group of spearheads, sword and arrow fragments have been found during the new excavations, although they have not yet been published. They were found in a single pit, thus potentially making this a single dedicatory ritual, suggesting that this was not a significant aspect of the cult. The fragment of Simonides (frag 11.29-31 W2) describes Menelaos present at the battle of Plataia, which has been used to connect the worship of Menelaos to the military sphere. It is indeed more likely that the weapons were related to Menelaos, rather than Helen, who in the literary sources for her cult (elsewhere) in Sparta was connected with marriage rituals. The terrace was rebuilt during the fifth century, which could have been associated with the earthquake in 464 B.C. Flower connected this with the success in the battle of Plataia, again referring to the fragment of Simonides. In terms of relative quantities, the military dedications are again outnumbered by the other types. There is also no literary description of the cult as military in nature, and it seems that this sanctuary also fails to support the idea that Spartan religion was overwhelmingly or particularly militaristic in nature.

The sanctuary of Apollo at Amyklai is located much further away from the other sanctuaries and from the political centre of Sparta (if the acropolis is to be seen as that), which may have had an impact on some of the dedications found here, such as the very low quantity of lead figurines. However, there are also some similarities.

During the Archaic period, when my investigation begins, the sanctuary had already been in use for a long time. During the Archaic period dedications refer to horses with both male and female riders. We have already seen horse riders, both male and female, associated with the Spartan cults of Orthia and Helen and Menelaos, and there they were connected with aspects of cult having to do with nature and fertility. Based on the myth about Hyakinthos, Apollo has in previous research been associated with fertility and nature, and the figurines of female riders further testify to this.

The nature and location of the old excavations produced an unlikely picture with no dedicatory material dating to the Classical period. The new excavations have already corrected this gap in the evidence, but we are still waiting for the publication of the finds. During the Hellenistic period, figurines of Artemis and Athena are dedicated in terracotta and stone. The armour of Athena possibly points towards the military aspect, although

there is no direct connection here to Apollo as the cult recipient. There is no evidence for a cult of Athena here, and her presence should be seen as that of a 'visiting god', as defined by Alroth. Further evidence for the military aspect during the Hellenistic period comes from the stele showing the god holding a spear with a sacrificial animal being led towards an altar. This iconography corresponds to Pausanias' description of the cult statue.

The undated loom weights point towards the presence of women and show that the god was not merely concerned with warfare and horses. The presence of several female figurines also indicates that the cult was relevant to women. Pausanias' description of the *chiton* woven by women, possibly for the festival, further supports the role women played in the cult. While his testimony is quite late, other, earlier evidence already testified to women's participation. The literary sources focus mainly on the festival of Hyakinthia held here, and the way that different stages of it refer to the agricultural cycle, through death and renewal. The wide participation of the population as described in the literary sources testifies to the importance of this cult in Sparta, despite its more remote location compared to the other sanctuaries discussed here. The views on centre and periphery are a matter of perspective, of course. It is most likely that the Amyklaion was the central sanctuary of Amyklai and its importance for the Spartan state is related to its importance for the Amyklaians as Spartan citizens and residents.

The military aspect of the cult can be seen among some of the dedications: two fragments of statues (of unknown date), and some Protocorinthian spearheads have been found here. The literary sources also describe a display of a cuirass during the festival of Hyakinthia. In addition, there are several different sources describing the cult statue depicting the god armed with a spear, and wearing a helmet. The statues of Athena are the only 'converted' military dedications found here, making the assemblage here quite different from the other sanctuaries considered in this study. In addition, literary testimonia about the main festival of the god do not mention a strong military connection. The fame of the festival and the abundance of non-military elements in it make it unlikely that the military aspect of the cult was a dominant feature.

Finally, the sanctuary of Athena, located on the Spartan acropolis shows a military connection both among the finds, as well as in the literary sources. The emphasis on civic and military nature of the goddess can already be found in the literary sources, which

describe the goddess as the 'city-protecting', and military dedications are described in the sanctuary.

The sanctuary also held importance for female worshippers, which is not evident in the literary sources. Archaic period terracotta figurines are mostly female, and some show the women nude and accentuating the pubic area by a hand gesture. The jewellery also highlights the role of female worshippers in the cult. If there is overlap with some dedications related to women in the different sanctuaries discussed here, there are also some differences. Importantly, objects related to textiles and weaving are not present in the sanctuary of Athena, indicating that her significance to female worshippers did not include the life stages we have seen at the sanctuaries of Orthia and the Menelaion.

Representations of horses were also found at the sanctuary as has been the case with the other sanctuaries discussed above. Here, the imagery of the horse receives a different context from the other three sanctuaries, because we have other evidence for the sanctuary being associated with success in equestrian competitions. The Panathenaic *amphorae* dated to the sixth and fifth centuries, and the Damonon-stele, dated to the end of the fifth century, as well Pausanias' description of a statue of a female Olympic victor in chariot racing Euryleonis in 368 B.C. The horses could indicate Athena's association with the horse in more general terms, but they could also be part of this dedicatory practice by successful, or aspiring, horse racers. The bells found at the sanctuary are ambiguous in meaning, but they are nearly unique to the sanctuary (beyond the three bells found in the Menelaion). The sanctuary was also extensively associated with civic matters. The several literary sources describing refugees at the sanctuary testify for the goddess' civic connection, as do the third century roof tiles paid for from by public funds, as we have already seen in the other sanctuaries.

The archaeological evidence also includes military dedications. From the end of the seventh century onwards, starting with *aryballoi* shaped as a helmeted man, converted military dedications are found here. Two other similar *aryballoi* are also found in terracotta. In addition, a terracotta figurine of a warrior, and two bronze armed Athenas from the fifth century add to the military dedications. Miniature armour is found here as well: a sixth century miniature breastplate and an undated terracotta miniature shield. Among the 'raw' military dedications are a fragment of a helmet, dated from the late sixth to the early fourth century B.C. The wide range of different types of military dedications suggests that the

military aspect was here a stronger part of the cult than at other sanctuaries studied here. While all the other sanctuaries have had military dedications, they have often been in very few categories, while here we have both real armour, and 'converted' offerings in a range of material and types. In addition, there is literary evidence pointing towards a sacrifice with a military association. The evidence for the cult statue is numismatic here as well, and it remains uncertain if the armed female was meant to be Athena Chalkioikos.

To sum up, the material evidence for the four sanctuaries does not support the idea that Spartan religion was predominantly militaristic. The aspect is present in one form or another at all four locations, but in most of them, the overall picture we gain from both archaeological and literary evidence is that the cults did not have a strong military focus. Instead, we can see a wide range of concerns is reflected in the evidence, from fertility, upbringing, marriage, to more general themes in civic and social life. The only place where the wide range of different military dedications and literary evidence suggests that the focus of the cult was placed on warfare, is the sanctuary of Athena. But even here, other concerns are reflected.

**Military dedications in Sparta**

What is perhaps initially striking among the military dedications found in the four sanctuaries is the fact of quite low quantities of real arms and armour, the 'raw' military dedications. Here we should take into consideration the considerable cost of making these objects, and how depositing them in sanctuaries is removing the valuable material from circulation.[847] This often resulted in the practice of melting dedications and reusing the metal, leaving us with a much more limited number of dedications than were originally there. Although presumably whatever was made from melted dedications still had to be the deity's property and could not be turned into secular objects. Another explanation was offered by Snodgrass, who observed a general trend of moving away from 'raw' offerings towards 'converted', and a low quantity of arms and armour could be a particular local preference of worshippers at Sparta. The difficulty of dating some of the individual arms and armour found in the Spartan sanctuaries poses a problem for observing trends through the centuries.

[847] Snodgrass 1980, 52; Morgan 1990, 217.

It should be emphasised, however, that Spartans regularly made dedications of arms and armour (as well as other types of military dedications), in the panhellenic sanctuaries of Delphi and Olympia, and in this way participating in the wider practise of setting up military dedications on these international arenas. However, the evidence for Spartan dedications at Delphi and Olympia shows that they are made during a limited period of time.[848] The known Spartan victory dedications, of which we know at Delphi, are relatively late.[849] The first military dedication is from the battle of Aegospotami in 405 B.C. (Paus. 10.9.7), and a few years later, after victory at the battle of Coronea in 394 B.C., Agesilaos made a large dedication (*dekate*) at Delphi, no less than a hundred talents, Xenophon writes (*Hell*. 4.3.21). At Olympia, the earliest 'converted' military dedication is dated to the late sixth to early fifth century B.C. and according to Pausanias it commemorates the so-called second Messenian war.[850] The inscription found at the sanctuary does not state a military connection for it, so it is possible that the association with war was a later construction.[851] Following this one, the first confirmed military dedication is associated with the mid-fifth century B.C. battle of Tanagra, after which a dedication was made (and incredibly, we have both an inscription and Pausanias' description of it).[852]

In addition to these, there are two inscriptions on military-related 'raw' dedications that name Spartans. These are relatively few, out of just over 100 inscriptions in total found on real arms and armour.[853] The earliest of these is a Corinthian type helmet, with a dedicatory inscription on the cheek piece reading τοῦ Διὸς Ὀλυμπίο, in a Spartan script,

[848] I have excluded here dedications of military leaders with no connection to 'raw' military offerings, or a specific battle.
[849] Excluding the incident described by Thucydides, where the Spartan general Pausanias supposedly inscribed his own name on the victory offering from the battle of Plataia (Thuc. 1.132). See Hornblower 1991, 218; Bonner & Smith 1943. The late date for Spartan military dedications may have been a result of difficulty of access due to the alliance of Athens and Argos before the victory at Tanagra (Scott 2010, 100.)
[850] For a recent analysis of the construction of Messenian history, including criticism for the dates and existence of the Messenian wars, see Luraghi 2011.
[851] IvO 252.
[852] Paus. 5.10.4; IvO 253. Where Pausanias wrote τῶ πολέμω, the inscription has τοῦ πο[λέμου, in the Corinthian script. See commentary in IvO. Pausanias does not seem to mention the whole inscription, as the fragments preserve letters from two more lines (Κορ[ινθ]ι and ρ).
[853] Inscriptions on arms and armour are collected in Anhang II in Frielinghaus 2011, 546-553.

dated to the first half of the 7th century B.C.[854] A fragment of a tripod mentions *hopla* of the Spartans, suggesting that it was associated with a dedication of arms from an unknown enemy. The piece is dated to the 6th C, and the script is Laconian.[855] These examples show that the Spartans did not only make their military dedications at home, and thus the local sanctuaries may have 'competed' with the international ones as primary recipients. The low quantity of arms and armour at Sparta could therefore be attributed to three possible causes: vagary of preservation/reuse of the objects; a preference towards 'converted' military offerings, or a preference for directing these types of dedications to sanctuaries outside Sparta.

**The balance between military and non-military dedications**

The balance between military and non-military dedications is clear: in total quantities there are throughout the centuries far more non-military dedications in the four sanctuaries studied here. I have already summarised the other concerns we can distinguish among the dedications, and they show that the worshippers by no means were invoking their gods for mostly military matters. If Spartan religion was, as Flower has argued, militaristic, we should be seeing a much higher number and range of different dedications referring to warfare. This is clearly not the case. However, we should also consider the literary sources for rituals taking place in the sanctuaries. The procession of armed men to the sanctuary of Athena on the acropolis is the only clearly military ritual we have evidence for. If we accept that Alcman's *Partheneion* describes a ritual taking place in the sanctuary of Orthia, and that it was a reference to the military rituals performed by the Spartan boys, we have another military reference. The whipping of boys at the altar in the same sanctuary does not have a direct military character, even though some scholars have argued for it based on an interpretation that the ritual was part of an initiation ritual. We might look for the cult statues for further emphasis on the military nature of the cult. Apollo, Athena and Orthia all had numismatic and other literary evidence suggesting that the cult images were armed. For the Menelaion we have no evidence for the cult images. To Flower, the armed statues of

[854] D24 in Frielinghaus 2011, 266. Jeffery dates it to sixth century based on the letter forms (Jeffery 1961, 191, 202). See also Chase 1950; Young 1950; Kunze 1967,87-88.

[855] There is no certain find place, but it is probably from Olympia: Willemsen 1957, 133; Frielinghaus 2011, 549, no. 43. Date: Peek 1941, 330-332; Jeffery 1961, 199, no. 19. SEG 11: 956/1214. Following Frielinghaus' restoration. Peek suggests ἄ[μειβε] in the end.

gods were key symbols for Spartan religion, and they could be argued to offer further proof of the military nature of these cults. However, the total balance still favours a counter-argument, that is, that Spartan religion was not particularly focused on war. The question of armed statues of gods at Sparta requires some further investigation, and I will discuss this topic next.

**Armed cult images in the context of Spartan sanctuaries**

After studying the four different Spartan sanctuaries and the literary and archaeological evidence for the nature of the cults, it has become clear that there is no evidence for war being a dominating aspect in Spartan religion. As we saw in the introduction (section 1.3.1), scholars have often quoted the passage in Plutarch describing that all Spartan statues of gods were armed.[856] This has been used to support the idea that Spartan religion was dominated by military concerns, but there has been no survey of the evidence for Spartan statues of gods. This is undoubtedly a topic that deserves a wider study in order to compare the number of armed Spartan statues with those in other poleis to see if Sparta had an exceptionally large number of them. Due to constraints of space here, I will present preliminary observations on the evidence for Spartan statues and to see how many of them are described as armed. This will give a possible indication of whether the testimony of Plutarch reflects reality.

I will here make use of Pausanias' description of ancient Sparta, in chapter 3. Pausanias describes various parts of the city centre of Sparta with several sanctuaries and quite a few statues. He, of course, does not describe everything he sees, and therefore using him as a source immediately comes with a caveat (he is not describing all statues of gods he saw in Sparta). In addition, when looking at the mentions of statues of gods, it is not clear if he is always careful to make note when a statue is armed (some statues may have been armed even if Pausanias does not mention it). The few times he does, he could potentially have done this because he thought it was unusual for some reason and worth a special

[856] Plut. *Mor*. 239A: "They worship Aphrodite in her full armour, and the statues of all the gods, both female and male, they make with spear in hand to indicate that all the gods have the valour which war demands"; Plut. Mor. 232D: "When someone inquired why all the statues of the gods erected among them were equipped with weapons, he said, "So that we may not put upon the gods the reproaches which are spoken against men because of their cowardice, and so that the young men may not pray to the gods unarmed." Both translations F. C. Babbitt, Loeb edition.

note. It is not possible to solve this issue, because his description was a subjective one. But if Spartan gods were always, or more often than elsewhere, depicted armed as Plutarch writes (Mor. 239a; 232d), we should expect Pausanias to make not of this unusual feature in the landscape of the city. Pausanias is writing his book around 174 A.D., roughly 50 years after the death of Plutarch, so while they are not contemporary, there is not a very long period of time separating the two authors.[857] Or course, we do not know the source for the particular note that all Spartan statues of gods were armed, which Plutarch quotes in his *Sayings of Spartans* and *Ancient Customs of the Spartans*. However, since it is often quoted in support of the military nature of Spartan religion, it is worth testing it, and while Pausanias' description of the city in the Roman period may be later than the focus of this dissertation, it provides an overview of the city as he saw it with many old and new statues. Pausanias describes the Spartan city in book 3, and I will here only focus on the city centre, which is where two of the sanctuaries studied above were located, and the area surrounding Amyklai and Therapne. That is, I will not consider statues Pausanias mentions further away in book 3, even though they would have formed a part of the Spartan polis during the Archaic to Hellenistic periods. This is done in order stay roughly within the same geographical area as the sanctuaries I have discussed above, and to eliminate any particularly local practices the perioikic areas of the polis may have had when it comes to depictions of gods.[858] Finally, I am only listing the statues Pausanias specifically mentions, i.e. I will not list sanctuaries, even though they most probably had statues in them. The vocabulary he uses varies, from *agalma* of a god to "there is a Hermes Agoraios" (Paus 3.11.11), which were different ways to describe what clearly were images of the gods. I have also left out depictions of gods in relief sculpture, such as those described on the throne of Apollo at Amyklai.

Pausanias lists in total 34 statues, and they are listed in Table 8 below:

[857] The date for Pausanias is based on a reference in the book (5.1.2.) where the refoundation of Corinth (44 B.C.) is described as 270 years before his own time. As the author of this dissertation very well knows, writing is a long pursuit, and this is only one point in time when Pausanias is writing his work. See discussion recently in Pretzler 2007, 23. For a recent overview of Plutarch and his works, see Beck 2013.

[858] For useful maps of different reconstructions of Pausanias' routes within Sparta, see Sanders 2009, p. 197, 200.

| Location in Paus. | Name of divinity (with epithet) | Described as armed? |
|---|---|---|
| 3.11.9 | Apollo Pythaeus | No |
| 3.11.9 | Artemis | No |
| 3.11.9 | Leto | No |
| 3.11.10 | Demos of the Spartiates | No |
| 3.11.11 | Hermes Agoraios | No |
| 3.12.4 | Athena Keleuthea | No |
| 3.12.5 | Athena | No |
| 3.12.8 | Apollo | No |
| 3.12.11 | Olympian Zeus | No |
| 3.12.11 | Olympian Aphrodite | No |
| 3.14.5. | Thetis | No |
| 3.14.6 | Herakles | No |
| 3.14.7 | Asklepios Agnitas | No |
| 3.14.8 | Herakles | No |
| 3.14.8 | Lykourgos | No |
| 3.15.3 | Herakles | Yes (*hoplismenon*) |
| 3.15.7 | Enyalios | No |
| 3.15.10 | Aphrodite Morpho | Yes (*hoplismene*) |
| 3.16.1 | Hilaeira | No |
| 3.16.1 | Phoebe | No |
| 3.17.6 | Zeus Highest | No |
| 3.18.1. | Aphrodite Ambologera | No |
| 3.18.1. | Sleep | No |
| 3.18.1. | Death | No |
| 3.18.8 | Aphrodite | No |
| 3.18.8 | Artemis | No |
| 3.18.8 | Kore | No |
| 3.18.8 | Sparta | No |
| 3.18.8 | Aphrodite at Amyklai | No |
| 3.18.9 | Graces | No |
| 3.18.9 | Artemis Leukophryne | No |
| 3.19.7 | Athena Alea | No |
| 3.19.7 | Ares | No |
| 3.20.3 | Dionysos | Uncertain |

Pausanias writes that only women were allowed to see the final statue listed on the table, that of Dionysos (3.20.3), so we may assume that he did not see it himself. He is therefore only listed here for the sake of completeness of the list.

As we can see, based on the account of Pausanias, armed statues were not frequent in Sparta. What is left out from the list are the cult statues from the sanctuaries discussed in my study, because for Orthia, Apollo, and Athena there is some evidence that they were armed. For Apollo, we can be certain that the statue was depicted armed (see section 4.2), for Athena and Orthia the evidence is based on Roman period numismatic evidence and it is not certain that the coins depict exactly those statues. For Orthia, the coin in question depicts a female statue with a deer (see section 2.4). By extension, the cult was certainly important enough in Spartan society to be a candidate for the design of a coin, and the deer does feature among the dedications at the sanctuary, and so Orthia is a candidate for the identity of the statue on the coin. As for Athena, the numismatic evidence used to support an armed cult image is also subject to debate. The Roman period coins show an armed statue with horizontal lines on the lower part of the body, and some have suggested that this depicts a row of bronze reliefs described by Pausanias to be somewhere at the sanctuary (either on the temple, or on the cult statue, or both). In addition, Flower also refers to the armed statue of Apollo at Thornax, north of the city (Paus. 3.10.8). But even if we include these four additional statues, the total does not support Plutarch's description of all gods being armed, and neither Flower's nor Parker's argument that a large number of statues were armed.

In the Introduction I have discussed how both Spartan society and Spartan religion has been seen as militaristic in previous research. While Hodkinson (2006) has worked to dispel some of the arguments, we saw that Flower (2018) maintains his argument for the militarism of Spartan religion. I will here address the ways this dissertation has contributed to the discussion of Spartan militarism, both in terms of the topic in general discussion on Spartan society, but also specifically in terms of the religion.

One of the ways Sparta has been argued to be militaristic has been through drawing parallels with modern warrior tribes. The presence of initiation rites, and emphasis on war, was supposed to have indicated that Spartan society maintained some archaic aspects in opposition to other Greek *poleis*. However, the parallel with the warrior tribes has been

shown to lack credibility, as the societies have been shown to have created some of the warlike practices in response to modernization and colonialism. In scholarship on Spartan rituals, the whipping contest at the sanctuary of Orthia and the Hyakinthia especially have been interpreted as initiation rites. The presence of youths, of both sexes for at least the Hyakinthia, was interpreted as an indicator for an initiatory function for the rituals (see sections 2.5.1 and 4.3.2 above). However, recent criticism against the initiation paradigm should be taken into consideration (see section 1.4.3 above). We lack specific references to the change of status, an introduction to a group, for those taking part in these two rituals in order to be able to see them as *initiation* rituals.

Hodkinson's 2006 article examined the different sources describing Spartan society as militaristic, and showed how the political context of the Peloponnesian war, and the philosophical debate about Sparta's decline after the battle of Leuktra were unreliable sources for the nature of Spartan society. If the very sources used to describe Spartan society as militaristic, how does Flower's argument maintain itself? He writes that Spartan "religion should be distinctive to the same degree that their other cultural practices were", and that it is the "combination or aggregate of these unique features that sets Sparta apart".[859] Flower's method of looking for support for his view on militaristic nature of Spartan religion means that he left out much of the evidence supporting the contrary. In fact, the second quote is a response to the idea that by finding parallels elsewhere we can downplay unique features! However, as I said already in the Introduction, one way to test Flower's interpretation is to look at the archaeological evidence, which he mostly ignored, and to see to what extent we can see military features among the dedications. The limitations of my study analysing those objects, as well as the literary sources concerning the particular cult sites, is of course that we do not have the complete set of dedications once taken to the sanctuaries. Postdepositional processes, as well as excavation methods and the state of publication all contribute to the 'minefield' of interpreting Spartan archaeological remains, as it was described by Whitley.[860] However, with these limitations in mind, we have seen several important things in my analysis of the dedications.

[859] Flower 2009, 196.
[860] Whitby 2002, 25.

Firstly, that in terms of total quantities, the military dedications do not dominate the dedicatory material. This is perhaps an obvious conclusion, and total quantities preserved to use are subject to the limitations of what data is available for us to analyse. Another way to look at this subject is to see in how many different categories of finds can we find military dedications. Here, we begin to see differences. 'Raw' military dedications, that is, dedications of real arms and armour are not found at the sanctuary of Orthia. The Amyklaion record has recently been added to by two bronze helmets, giving a total of three, and the ongoing excavations and subsequent publication will be able to give us more information about the military aspect at this cult site. At the Menelaion, a deposit of several different types of arms was excavated during the most recent, but still unpublished excavations (see section 3.4.5). That they were found in a single pit (and thus potentially a single act of dedication) is significant, but we must wait for the publication to determine if it was a case of initial dedication, or the result of clearing out dedications already placed in the sanctuary previously. At the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos one piece of a helmet and a spearhead has been found during the excavation. In the structure next to the sanctuary, a cache of arms was discovered, but it is not clear if these were intended for Athena.

Among the 'converted' military offerings, the picture we get changes somewhat. Now the sanctuary of Orthia has the largest total quantity of military dedications, with the lead figurines depicting warriors and armed gods and goddesses. If the chronological range is to be trusted, they continued to be dedicated until the Hellenistic period. Among the other categories of finds, the situation is different, and only five ivory objects depicted warriors, one terracotta relief and four limestone reliefs had warriors depicted on them. Thus, it is mainly the lead figurines, which form the bulk of the material. At the Menelaion, the lead figurines of warriors and some armed goddesses form the only 'converted' military dedications. At the Amyklaion, only the Hellenistic period fragments of marble statues of Athena, one lead figurine depicting Athena, and a fragment of an ivory plaque (probably Archaic in date) showing a leg with a greave fall within this group. Finally, at the sanctuary of Athena, we have one terracotta warrior and miniature breastplate and three helmeted *aryballoi* from the Archaic period, and three lead warriors (of unknown date), while from the fifth and fourth centuries we have bronze figurines of an armed Athena, and finally the fifth century over life-size marble statue of a warrior.

Thus, while the sanctuary of Orthia has the largest total quantity of military dedications, we can see that when we divide them into 'raw' and 'converted', the sanctuary of Athena has a wider range of different types of military dedications. This sanctuary is also the only one of the four, which has literary sources describing rituals related to war – the armed procession to sacrifice. Thus, perhaps instead of looking at the total quantities of objects, which is unlikely to represent a consistent percentage of the original whole assemblage, it is better to look at the range of evidence for the military aspect of the cult. This way the cult of Athena emerges as the one in Sparta with the strongest focus on warfare. The low quantities overall do not allow for much discussion on the possible change in frequency of military dedications, and the limited contextual information prevents us from dating some of the military dedications. However, among non-military finds we have observed a change in the dedicatory patterns in roughly the mid-sixth century, when both the Menelaion and the sanctuary of Orthia had new building works, and during a similar period of time, dedications or horses declined, and new types, such as the deer, emerged. It seems that during this time, there were wider changes going on in Spartan religious practice and the ideas they had of their divinities, with Orthia beginning perhaps to be associated with Artemis. This association may have briefly taken place at the Menelaion, but only at the sanctuary of Orthia did this process lead to the goddess referred to Artemis Orthia in the Roman period. The stamped roof tiles found the sanctuaries of Orthia, Menelaion and Athena show that while the total quantities of dedications decline during the Hellenistic period, there is state investment in the buildings in the shrines, testifying for the continued significance these sanctuaries had in Spartan religious life.

Finally, the supposed tendency for the Spartans to depict their gods armed. Even Hodkinson admitted there were several 'prominent' armed statues (Athena and Aphrodite on the acropolis, and Apollo at Amyklai). He balanced this by drawing a parallel with other Greek *poleis*, where armed statues are also found.[861] However, it is not enough in this case to say that there are three, granted, prominent armed statues in Sparta. We saw from the short survey of Pausanias' description of statues in Sparta that the armed ones are vastly outnumbered by those, which are not described as armed. Even when accounting for Pausanias missing a few here and there, the suggestion that many, or all, statues of the gods

[861] Hodkinson 2006, 141.

were armed cannot be supported. Surveying only Pausanias' testimony is, however, not sufficient to put this topic to rest, and further study involving other literary sources and possible epigraphic evidence is needed in the future.

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Image removed for copyright reasons.

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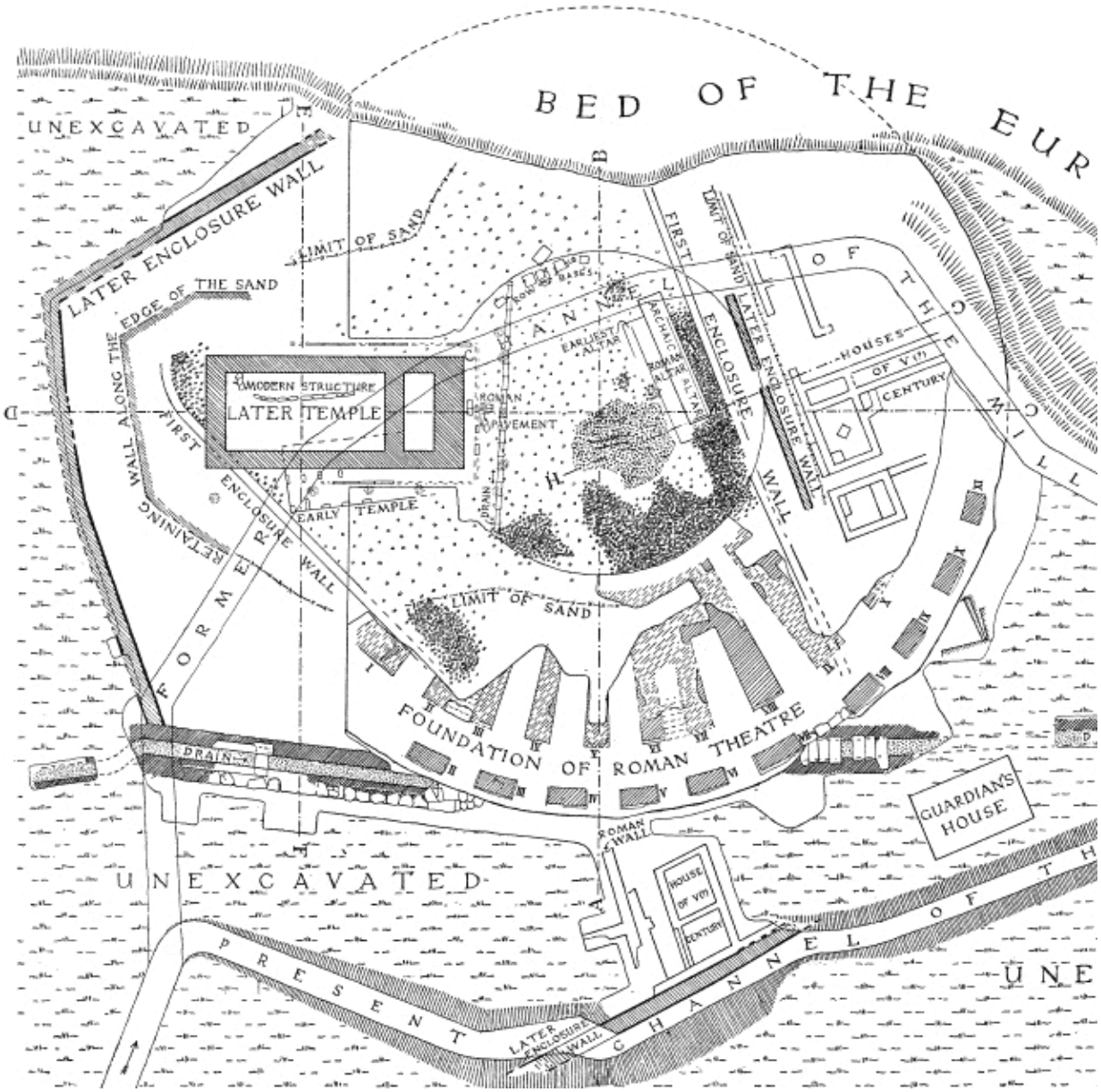

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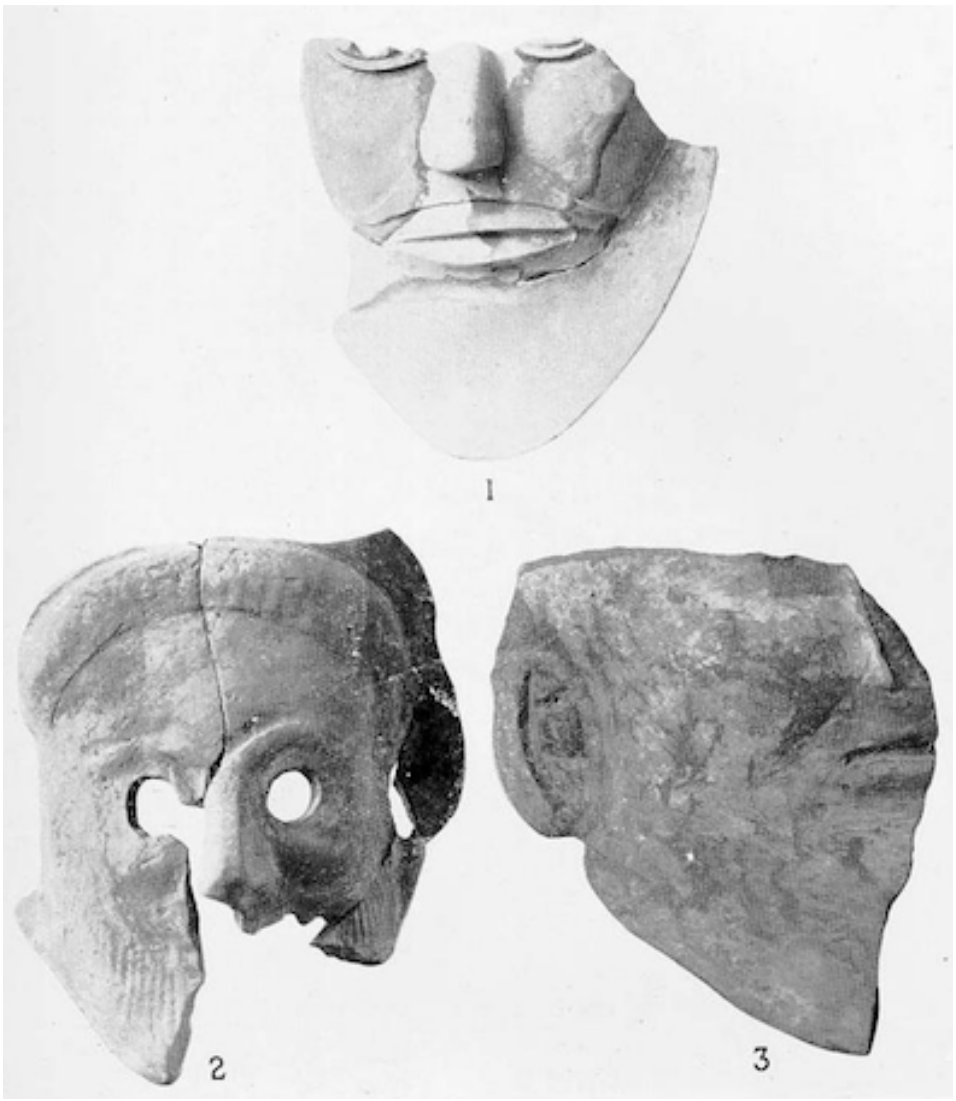

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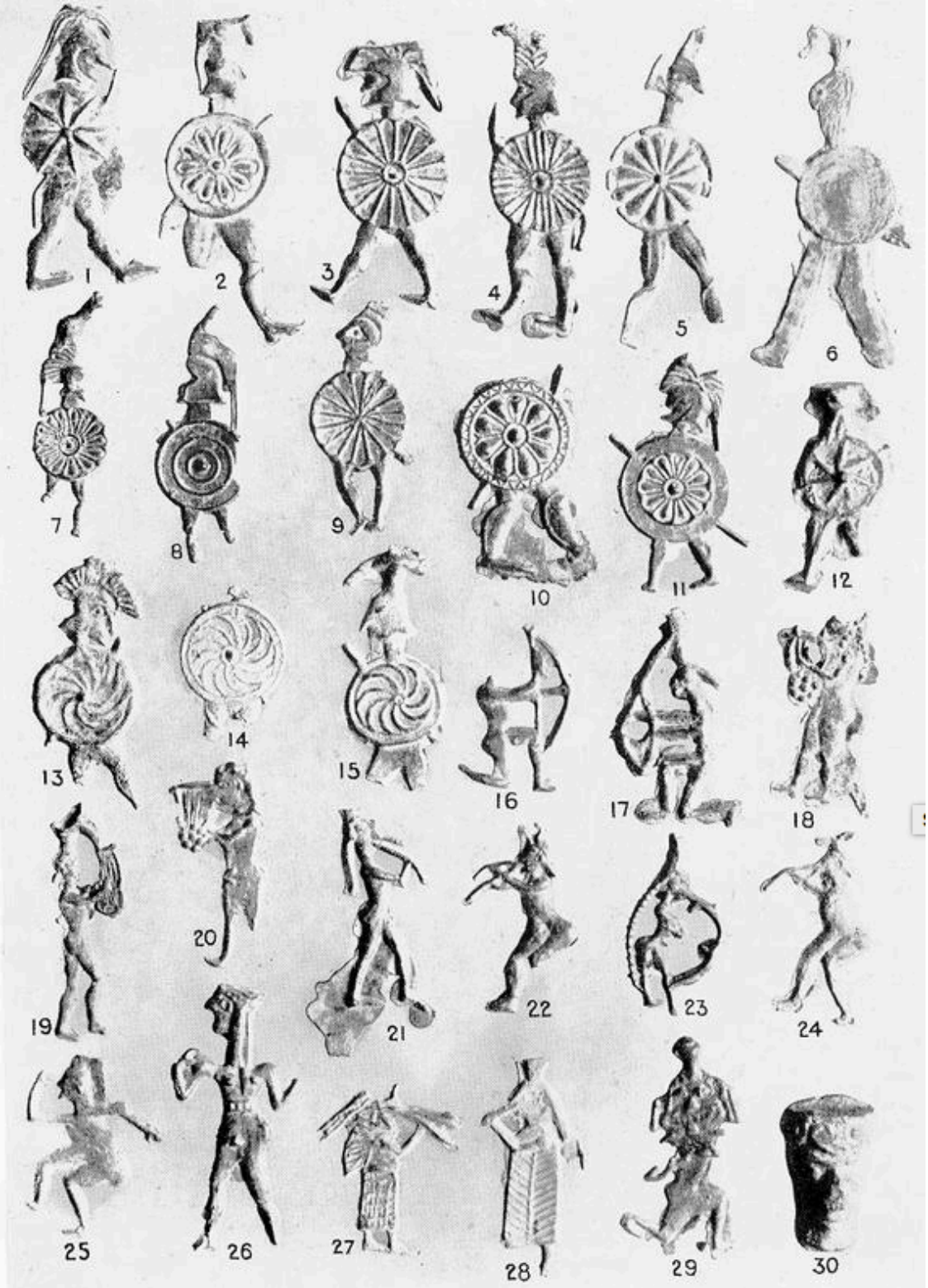

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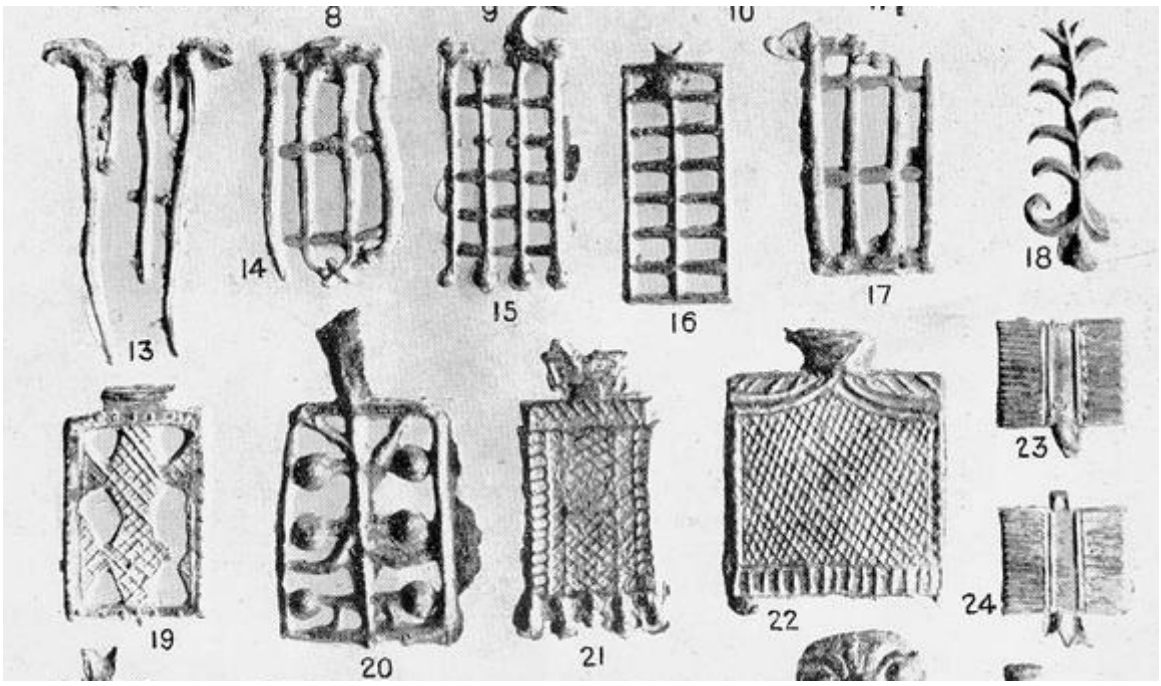

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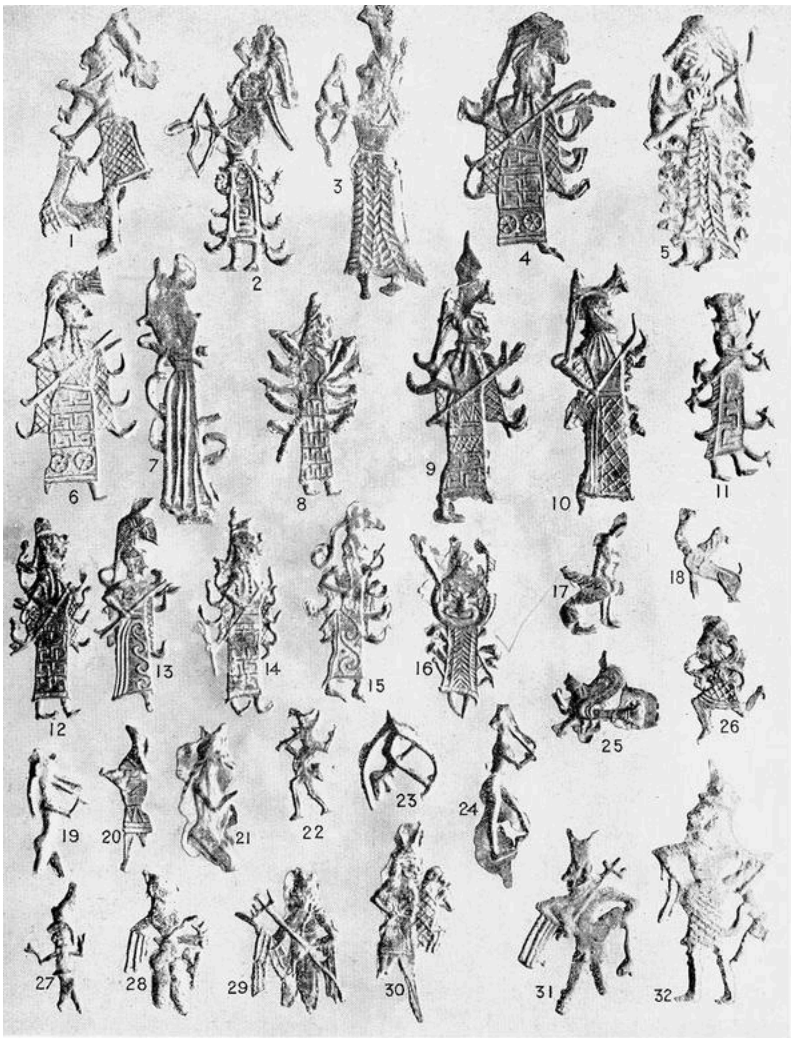

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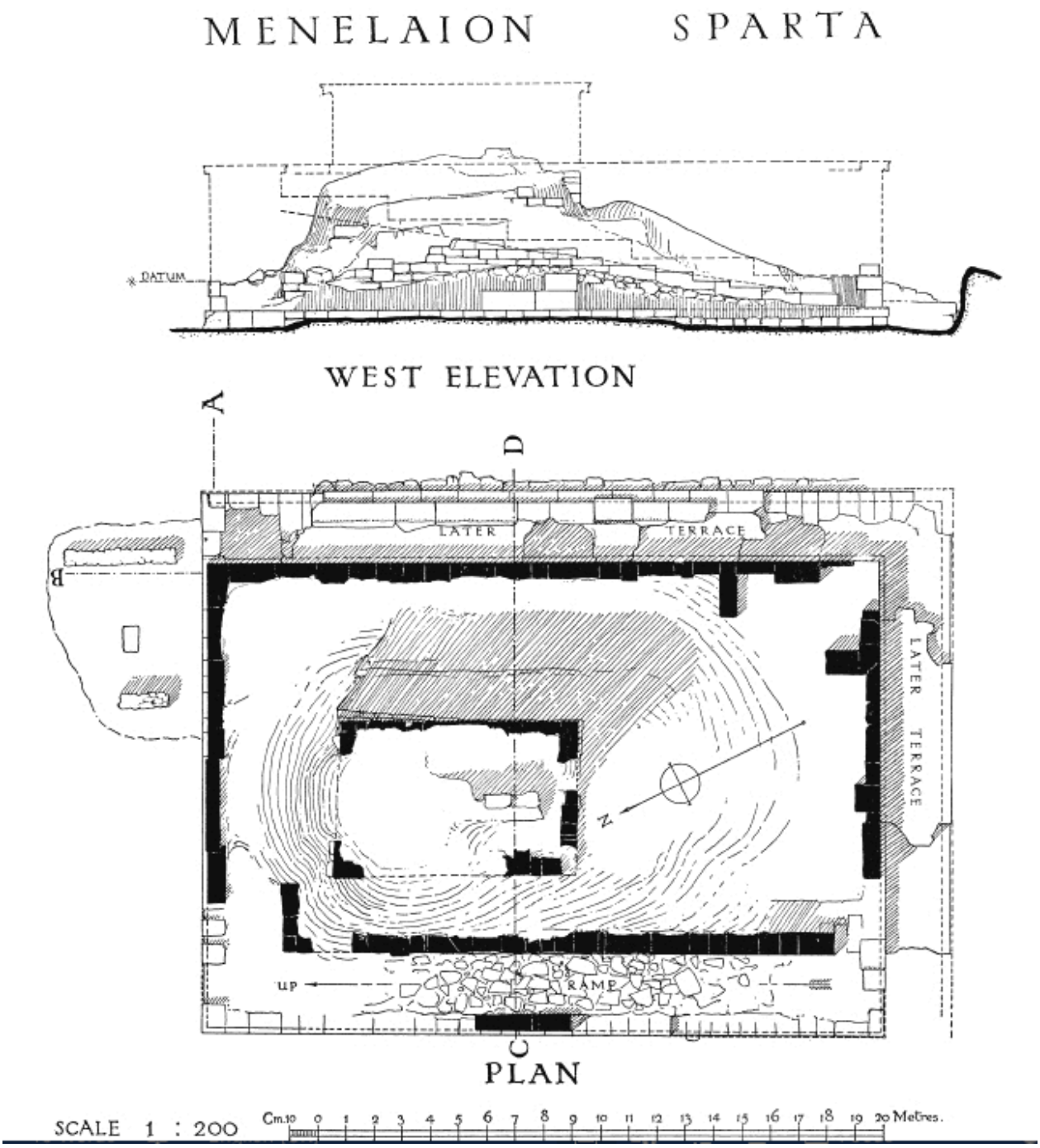

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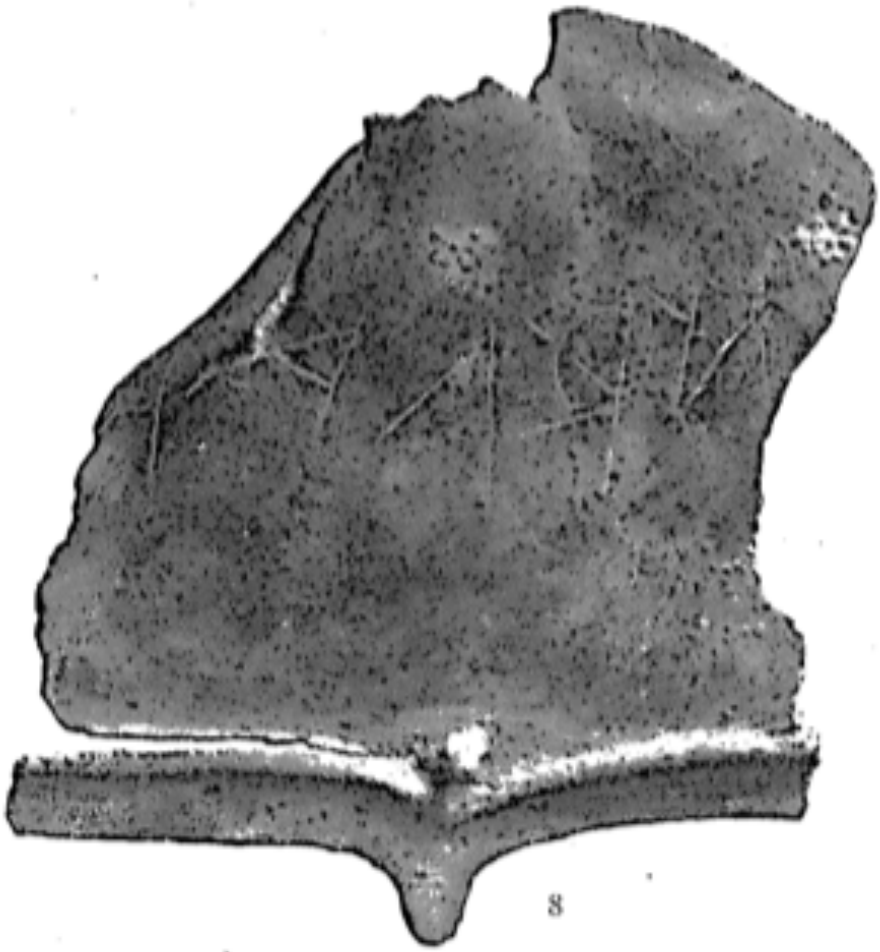

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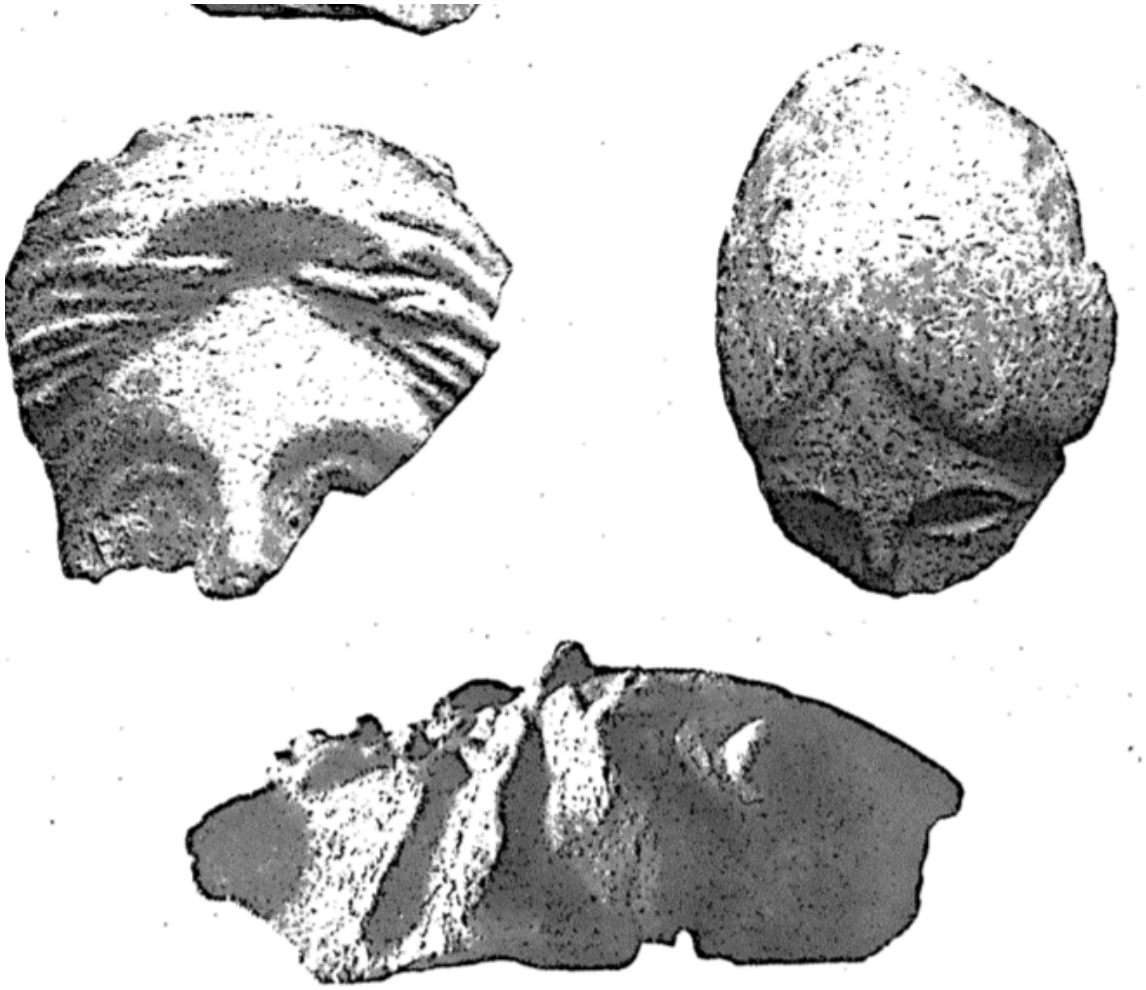

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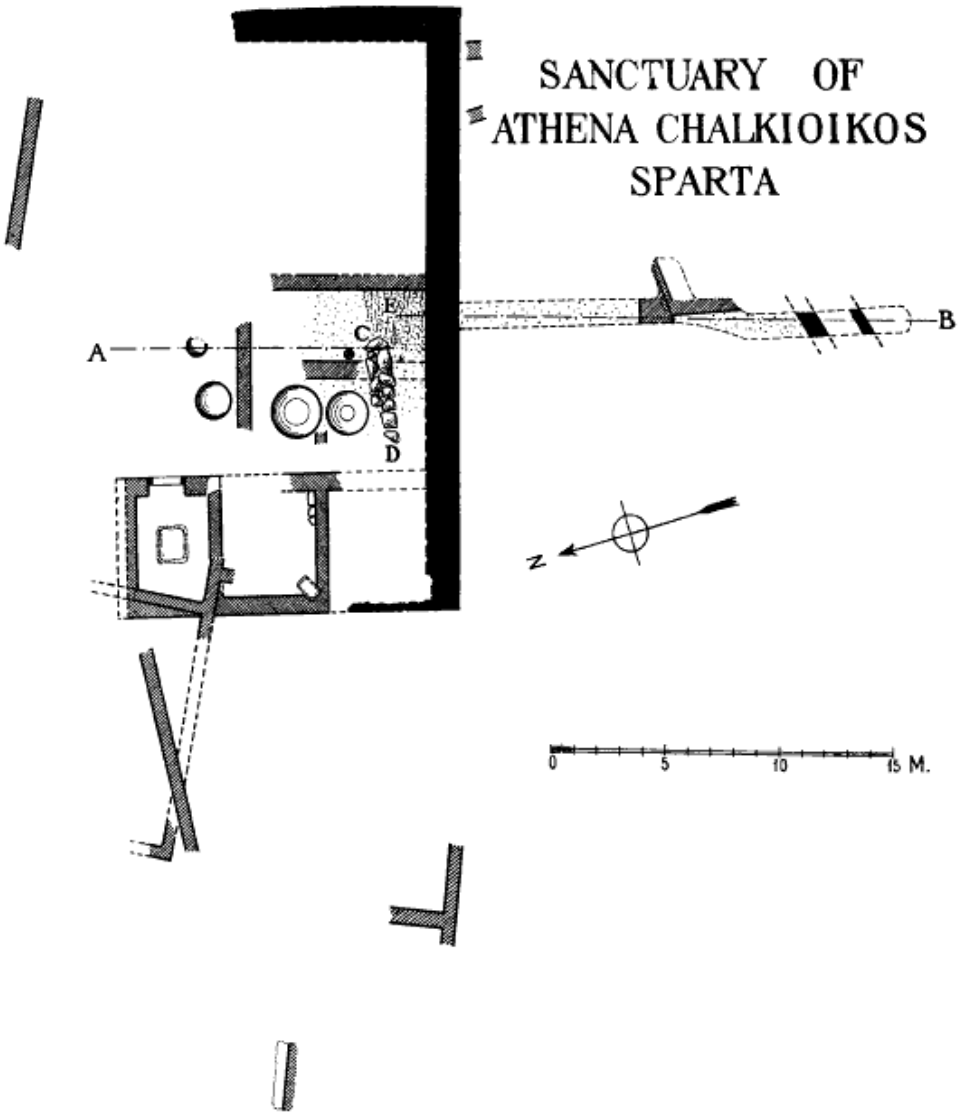

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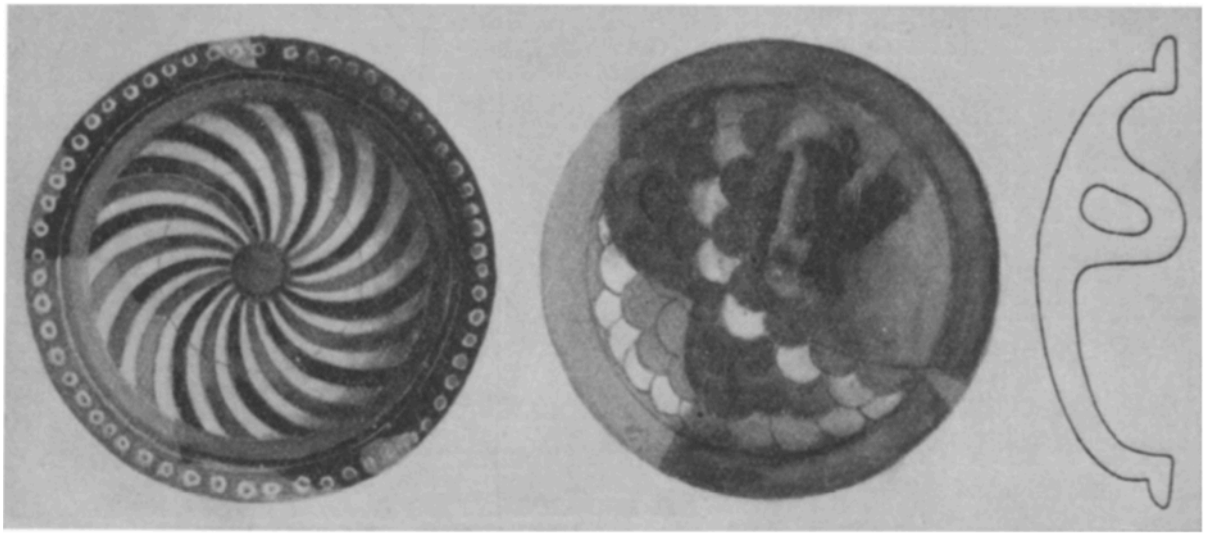

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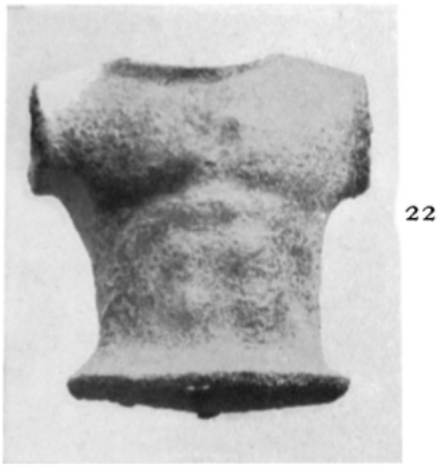

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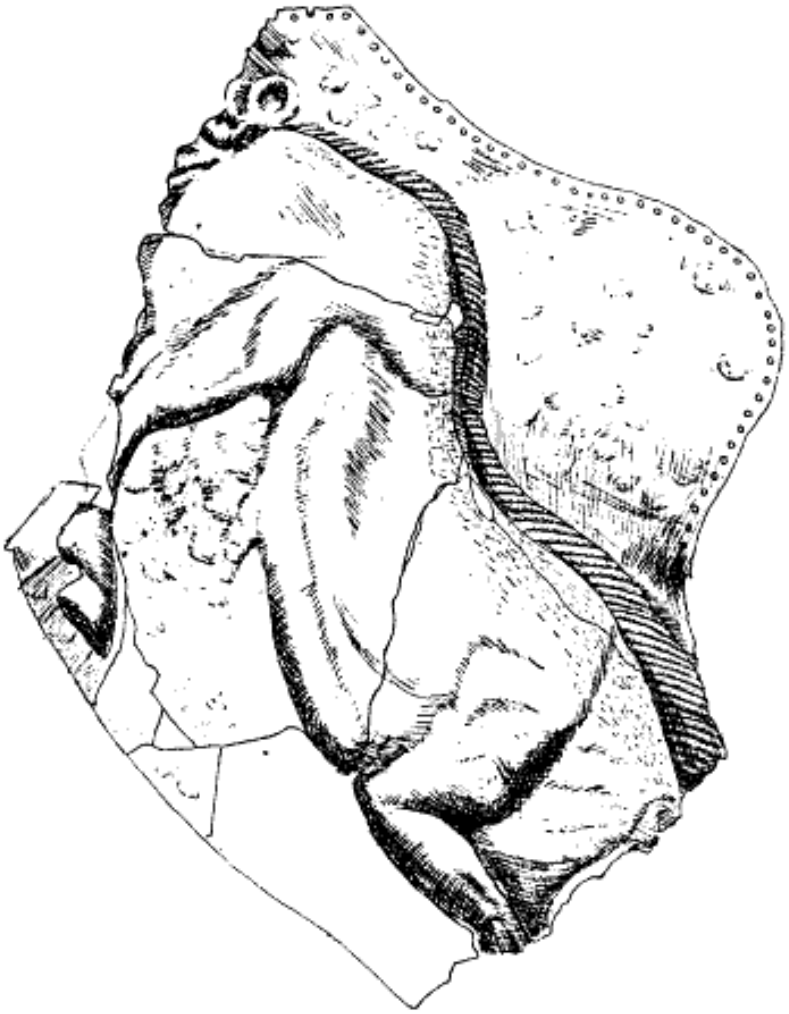

FIG. 6.—BRONZE CHEEK-PIECE. (Scale 4 : 5.)

**Fig. 19: Marble statue of a warrior from the sanctuary of Athena Chalkioikos**

**Fig. 20: Coin possibly depicting Athena**


**Fig. 21: Coin possibly depicting Apollo at Amyklai**